SOCIALISM IN ROCHESTER, 1900-1917

by

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PREFACE

The picture which the writer tries to draw of the radical movement of Rochester in the following pages is one of virgin territory. The information hereincontained, sparse enough at best, attempts a comprehensive picture of this movement. Since currently, some odium toward communists attaches to socialism in general, the gleaning of information for this thesis from personal contacts was difficult, while the treatment of this radical movement in the press and elsewhere was of the minimum sort. I have tried to deal with the subject objectively and to present the radical movement in Rochester so that, in effect, it speaks for itself.

For kindnesses in regard to information and materials, I am indebted to persons too numerous to mention by name. I am also indebted to the Rochester city historian and the faculty of the University of Rochester's History Department for a critical reading of the text and suggestions. For typing of the thesis I wish to acknowledge especially the help of my wife, Lois. To all of these I am most grateful.

John Dutko

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CHAPTER I

SOCIALISM BEFORE 1900

Some International Aspects

There had been socialism preached before Karl Marx, and there was non-Marxian socialism expounded after Karl Marx, but prior to World War I the major form of socialism was Marxian. After the First International was organized in 1864, the greatest clash was that between the anarchists led by the fiery Michael Bakunin, on the one hand, and the Marxists on the other with the Marxists assuming greater dominance with the passing of time.

Branches of the First International were founded in the American cities of New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. In 1872 the First International transferred its headquarters from The Hague to New York City to escape possible capture by the anarchists. At a meeting in Philadelphia on July 5, 1876, however, the First International read its own epitaph and died.[1] In 1889 the International was resurrected and lasted to 1914,

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[1] S. F. Markham, A History of Socialism (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1931), p. 252.

when it became a casualty of the war. This Second International excluded only the anarchists and had affiliates in twenty-seven countries by 1900. Not entirely Socialist, it included labor parties of a radical tinge. "In 1914 the Second International had about twelve million members throughout the world," one historian estimated, and "ranged from Bolsheviks to the mildly socialistic British Labor Party ...."[2]

As each was organized, the two socialist parties of the United States-- the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party-- became members of the Second International. They took part in the international congresses held at Paris in 1900, Amsterdam in 1904, Stuttgart in 1907, Copenhagen in 1910, and Basle in 1912. These international congresses arrived at agreements on several principles of socialism: the socialization of the means of production and exchange, international unity and action by workingmen, conquest of political power by the proletariat organized as class parties, and, lastly, trade union acceptance of the class struggle as one of their tenets and their recognition of the necessity for political action.[3]

The internationalism so prominent in pre-World War I socialism was one of its outstanding features in

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[2]Ibid., p. 252.

[3]Ibid., pp. 146-147.

all countries. It was rapidly growing and developing. However, it was all but snuffed out in the clash with the greater emotional impact of nationalism generated by World War I. Socialist internationalism suffered irreparably. It lost much of its original vigor, optimism, and idealism. The parts disrupted the whole, and when it regained its equilibrium after the war it took a new direction.

The strength of socialism in the principal European countries in the 1900-1914 period, as shown in the following table, is unmistakable.

TABLE 1

SOCIALIST VOTE IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES[4]

Country	Elections (1901-1906)	Elections (1907-1910)	Elections (1911-1914)
Germany	3,011,000	3,259,000	4,250,000
France	878,000	1,106,000	1,389,000
Holland	66,000	82,000	162,000
Denmark	43,000	.....	107,000
Sweden	9,000	.....	173,000
Norway	25,000	92,000	125,000

[4] S. F. Markham, A History of Socialism. These figures are compiled from scattered portions of this history.

Origins of Socialism in the United States

The Socialist Labor Party

The financial panic of 1873 stimulated the organization of a national socialist party in America, the Social Democratic Party, but this party declined shortly and was soon replaced by the Socialist Labor Party. One year after the First International was dead the Socialist Labor Party was launched in 1877 at a convention of socialist groups in Newark, New Jersey, and comprised seventy-two sections with a membership of seven thousand, mostly German.[5]

When Daniel DeLeon, "with white beard, soft white hands, black coat, gray trousers, and handkerchief around the neck in place of a collar," joined the Socialist Labor Party in 1889 the party was transformed. Born on the island of Curacao off the coast of Venezuela in 1852, the son of a doctor, he claimed descent from Ponce De Leon, the Spanish explorer. Graduated with honors from Columbia University's Law School, De Leon lectured on international law a short time at Columbia before being caught up in radical politics.

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[5]Arnold Petersen, Daniel De Leon: Social Architect (Labor News Co., New York, 1941; copy, Library of Congress). This has a biased, uncritical account of De Leon's life and the Socialist Labor Party. Petersen was national secretary of the party in 1941.

In 1886 De Leon campaigned for Henry George, the single taxer, for mayor of New York City, as did Walter Rauschenbusch of Rochester, then a Baptist minister in New York. When, in 1888, Nationalist Clubs sprang up as a result of the publication of Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, De Leon joined the Nationalists, who called for nationalization of all industries without any provision for the class struggle or the abolition of the wealthy. It was at this time that De Leon mastered Marxism and joined the Socialist Labor Party, which he soon came to lead. Arnold Petersen, biographer of De Leon, contends that De Leon's reading of Marx and Lewis Henry Morgan, a contemporary Rochester ethnologist, led to his conversion to socialism. Both De Leon's friends and enemies considered him to be a scholar, an excellent writer and speaker, and a man of great energy and devotion to his cause. His doctrinaire approach to Marx, however, his uncompromising spirit in party disputes, and his labor policies led him to be called an "autocrat," "dictatorial," and "more Marxian than Marx." He was also called "the purest scientist of revolutionary Marxism the world has ever known." In 1891 De Leon became associate editor of The People, the party organ, with Lucien Sanial (Lewis Corey).

With the advent of De Leon into the leadership, the Socialist Labor Party tried to capture or direct the

growing labor movement. In 1893 the American Federation of Labor was nearly captured when, at its convention, Thomas J. Morgan, a Socialist, sponsored a resolution which advocated collective ownership of the means of production and distribution. The resolution was passed. However, this resolution called for a referendum, and this was defeated by Gompers and his aides.

Meanwhile, De Leon had joined the Knights of Labor, and here he again led his party to near success. When De Leon failed to get a Socialist editor appointed to the official organ of the Knights, a split was precipitated, and De Leon broke with the Knights in 1895. In this year he was expelled from the Knights and severed relations with the American Federation of Labor.

The Socialist Labor Party proceeded to establish a rival union, The Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, which was based upon industrial unionism (De Leon held craft unionism in greatest contempt) and revolutionary socialism as preached by Marx and De Leon. The formation of this organization had several important results. First, it embittered the rank and file of labor toward this dual unionism initiated by Socialists and isolated the Socialists from the rank and file of labor as only a small number of workers actually became members of the Alliance. Secondly, it became clear that the American workers were more interested in immediate "bread and

butter" issues like wages and shorter hours than in revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. And, lastly, it led to the ruinous split in the ranks of the Socialist Labor Party itself.

What Lenin considered to be a real contribution to Marxian thought was De Leon's theory that the Socialist organization of government and representation should be by industries, not by geographical areas.[6] The revolutionary political party would be combined with the industrial unions in the class struggle. Through industrial unions, unified and federated, using the weapon of the general strike, De Leon envisioned the seizure of political power. Independently, the Russian workers' soviet system later developed before the death of De Leon in 1914. The Russian revolution of 1905 witnessed the beginnings of the Russian soviet system of later days. Lenin and De Leon shared similar views with regard to the belief that the industrial union should be the basis of the coming Socialist state.

When the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance was founded in 1895, De Leon became and remained one of its officers until it merged in 1905 with the Industrial Workers of the World. Its numbers were meager. By the

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[6]Paul Frederick Brissenden, The I.W.W.: A Study of American Syndicalism, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1919), pp. 241-242.

year 1905 it numbered 1,450, according to De Leon (though only 600, according to Morris Hillquit). Thus the De Leon plan for revolutionary and socialist industrial unions was a failure.

The course of the Socialist Labor Party was well determined when a resolution was passed at Cooper Union on December 15, 1895, calling for the creation of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, rejection of the American Federation of Labor and the Knights of Labor by all workers, the dogged waging of the class struggle, and the formation of revolutionary industrial unions. At its June 28, 1900 convention the party abolished immediate demands from its platform.[7]

The height of Socialist Labor Party influence was reached in 1896. In that year's presidential campaign, with Charles H. Matchett of Brooklyn as its candidate, the party polled 82,214 votes, a considerable gain over the 1892 vote of 21,512.[8] However, the Socialist Labor Party went into gradual but steady decline after this year. According to some writers, the peak membership of the party was "never in excess of 6,000."[9]

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[7]Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, (Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1945), p. 585.

[8]S. F. Markham, A History of Socialism, p. 254.

[9]Lillian Symes and Travers Clement, Rebel America, (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1934), p. 206.

The split in the Socialist Labor Party took place in the convention of 1899 over De Leon's labor policies and domination of the party. The rebellion was led by a faction which had as its organ the New Yorker Volkszeitung, a German Socialist paper of which Hugo Vogt was editor. Vogt had taken up the cudgels against De Leon's trade union policies. Among the rebels were Morris Hillquit,[10] a New York lawyer, Charles Matchett, the party's 1896 presidential candidate, Algernon Lee, later educational director of the socialist Rand School, and Benjamin Hanford, vice-presidential running mate of Debs in the 1904 and 1908 elections. The Volkszeitung faction, having seceded, tried to appropriate the party name and symbol. The secessionists raided the party headquarters and a battle ensued. The raiders were defeated. Later the courts of New York upheld the De Leonite claims to the party name. This applied only to New York State and, for a short time, two Socialist Labor Party organizations existed on the national level and both published their own versions of the party paper, The People. The rebel faction of the party met in convention on January 27, 1900, in Rochester, New York. This faction was to be one

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[10] Except for Debs, Hillquit was probably the most important pre-World War I Socialist. Born in Riga, Russia, in 1870, he came to American when 15 years old. He worked in factories and at numerous trades before becoming a labor lawyer. A graduate of N. Y. University Law School in 1893, writer of several histories of the Socialist movement, Hillquit represented American labor and American Socialists for forty years. He died in 1933.

of the parent bodies of the Socialist Party.

Precursors of the Socialist Party

Independently of the Socialist Labor Party a new socialist movement had begun to develop in the mid-West. The rise and decline of the Populist's People's Party, starting in Kansas and spreading through the South and West, had paved the way for the new Socialist organizations.

Two men, J. A. Wayland, an editor, and Colonel R. J. Hinton, had a curious plan by which a western state could be infiltrated with Socialist colonizers, thus capturing the state for Socialism. To realize this aim they initiated the formation of the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth. This party aroused the interest of Eugene Debs, later the central figure in American Socialism.

Debs was president of the American Railway Union, which was defeated in the 1894 railway strike. Influenced by his labor experiences, by Victor Berger,[11] Milwaukee Socialist, and dissatisfied with the Democratic Party, Debs moved gradually toward the Socialists. The defeat of Bryan in 1896 first led Debs toward the Brotherhood

[11] Victor Berger, born in Austria-Hungary in 1860, attended the University of Budapest and Vienna. After coming to America he worked at several trades. He taught a short time in the Milwaukee public schools. Becoming a member of the Socialist Labor Party, he left it in 1889 and joined the Populists. He edited the Milwaukee Daily Vorwaerts from 1892-1898.

of the Cooperative Commonwealth. In June, 1897, Debs had reorganized some of his American Railway Union membership and worked out a union in Chicago with the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth. The new party was called the Social Democracy of America. It was a polyglot outfit, made up of colonizers mostly, but including trade unionists, socialists, and radicals of every species and design.

This party lasted until the first convention, which met on June 7, 1898, at Uhlich's Hall in Chicago with ninety delegates assembling. Debs was chairman and Emma Goldman was a delegate. The Socialists had organized prior to the convention to dismiss any colonizing scheme as was envisioned by the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth.[12] But the colonizers controlled the convention and adopted their plank for "colonization" by a vote of fifty-three to thirty-seven. The defeated Socialists, believers in political action --among them Debs, Jesse Cox, Seymour Stedman, a lawyer, and Milwaukee's Victor Berger-- withdrew from the convention and founded the Social Democratic Party, with Debs and Berger on the executive board of the new organization. It was this party

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[12] Lillian Symes and Travers Clement, Rebel America, pp. 206-207. These authors also note that "a committee was appointed which later endorsed a scheme to acquire 560 acres of land in the Cripple Creek region of Colorado. This was to be the site of the model "cooperative commonwealth."

which was the second of the two parent bodies of the Socialist Party. It was to unite with the anti-De Leon faction of the Socialist Labor Party which had split away from the original Socialist Labor Party in 1899.

The Rochester and Indianapolis Conventions

The first national convention of the anti-De Leon Socialists was held in Rochester, New York, on January 27, 1900, "with fifty-nine delegates..... N. I. Stone, editor of The People, the rival of the De Leonite paper, addressed the delegates."[13] The convention met in the Common Council chamber of the City Hall. Chairman of the convention was Max S. Hayes, militant editor of the Cleveland Citizen, a socialistic trade union newspaper, while Richard Kitchelt, one of Rochester's most prominent Socialists at the time and a lithographer, was secretary of the convention.

On the evening of the second day's session of the convention, a public meeting was held at the Empire Theatre, where Job Harriman, Los Angeles lawyer and orator, Max Hayes, editor, and Martha Moore Avery, a Boston Socialist, "probably the most famous woman in the country,"[14] addressed "nearly a thousand people..... A notable feature

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[13] Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, pp. 586-588.

[14] According to a Rochester Herald writer.

was the number of women present."[15] Philip Jackson, a Rochester Socialist, was chairman of the meeting.

"A scathing denunciation of the trusts," and particularly "Mark Hanna's trust,"[16] was presented by Job Harriman, whose oratory led the Rochester Herald to predict that he would stampede the convention and gain the presidential nomination of the party. Harriman --"satirical,.... whose tongue is as bitter as aloes"-- received a great ovation. The trade unions were heading for Socialism, said Max Hayes, and they could not help it. He denounced lawyers as legislators and expounded on the social ownership of utilities and industries. Martha Moore Avery, speaking "scientifically," asserted that "the greatest indictment of capitalism is its deformity of men and minds."[17]

At the third day's session of the national convention two resolutions were passed which repudiated dual unionism, endorsed trade unions, and urged all members of the party to join unions. An appeal was made for unity with the Social Democratic Party. The convention then proceeded to send greetings to the latter and a nine-man committee was appointed to negotiate a merger "as equals."[18] It was known that the Social Democratic

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[15] Rochester Herald, January 29, 1900.

[16] Ibid., [17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., January 30, 1900.

Party was to hold its convention on March 6, 1900, in Indianapolis.

On the last day of the convention, February 1, 1900, by a unanimous standing vote a national ticket was decided upon. Job Harriman was nominated for president and Max Hayes for vice-president. The Rochester Herald noted that Frank Sieverman, Rochesterian and national organizer for the United Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, was nominated for vice-president but withdrew in favor of Hayes.[19] Charles Matchett, Socialist Labor Party presidential candidate in 1896, was proposed for the nomination as presidential candidate, but his health was given as reason for withdrawal. A former minister, a lawyer, wearing long black hair, smooth shaven face, dressed in solemn black,[20] Harriman as an orator was compared with Bryan, and it was considered that a choice between Harriman and Debs would be made for the 1900 presidential campaign.

On March 6, 1900, the Social Democratic Party national convention also selected a nine-man committee to confer with the nine-man committee appointed by the Rochester convention. Debs was nominated for president by the Social Democratic Party. A meeting of the two parties was held in New York on March 25, 1900, and here

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[19] Rochester Herald, February 2, 1900.

[20] Ibid.

greement was reached on all important issues. A head-
uarters was established in Springfield, Massachusetts,
nd Debs and Harriman were selected as candidates for
president and vice-president, respectively. The name of
the party was to be the Social Democratic Party, and a
referendum of the members of both parties was authorized
and held.

The actual first unity convention took place, however, on July 29, 1901, the chairman of which was Professor George D. Herron of Iowa's Grinnell College, an outstanding "social gospel" minister and one of the most controversial figures in the country. It was at this convention that the name Socialist Party was chosen, and the party headquarters were shifted from Springfield to St. Louis, Missouri.[21]

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21 Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, pp. 586-588.

CHAPTER II

ROCHESTER SOCIALISM--1900 TO 1905

Background and Conditions

Rochester's life at the turn of the century was much like the life of the nation. Differences in emphases, overtones, and personalities did exist, however. The main theme appears as one of growth, development in the intellectual, industrial, labor and social climate of the city. As this development proceeded, out of the total background obtruded some of the conditions in the city which gave rise to a dynamic and urgent movement of discontent.

The population of the city jumped from 162,608 in 1900 to a figure of 295,750 in 1920,[1] and in the wake of this great increase came the development of the slum areas in the downtown sections around Front and Water and State Streets and Central Avenue. The fourth, seventh, eighth, and seventeenth wards of the city, with their large immigrant populations, became areas of concentrated discontent in the 1900-1917 period.

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[1]Rochester City Directories (1900 and 1920), Rochester Public Library, Rochester, N.Y.

Concern for the living conditions of the people in Rochester's slums was expressed by the health officer, Dr. George W. Goler, in a speech at Plymouth Church on December 4, 1901. He warned that Rochester's slums would become just as bad as some of those in the larger cities if action was not taken. Illustrating his lecture with pictures, he noted conditions in certain areas of Rochester and condemned the greed of landlords in excluding air, light, and sunshine, and failing to provide adequate sewage. Lower State Street tenements he pointed out as especially bad. With charts he showed that there were three hundred tuberculosis deaths annually in the city, many of them he directly related to the conditions which he was depicting. He contrasted spacious eleventh and nineteenth wards with such crowded wards as the fourth. In concluding he asked for the "abolition by law of unventilated, unlighted rooms."[2]

One of the least salutary features of the industrial picture of the city, as manufacturing and women's employment in industry greatly increased, was the employment of children under fifteen in factories. In 1900 there were 959 children reported as so employed.[3] And

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[2]Rochester Herald, December 5, 1901.

[3]Ibid., November 29, 1902. This story was based on the U. S. Bureau of the Census Report for 1900.

in the squalid sections of Rochester, wherein the poorer residents of the city lived, such as Front Street, South Avenue, and Central Avenue, were also to be found the "red light districts" of Rochester.[4]

These were some of the elements contributing to the social discontent in Rochester and were some of the conditions which made the growth of a Socialist movement in Rochester possible. The eradication of poverty and of the conditions which surrounded it were among the ideals of the Socialists of Rochester, and against the evils of a social system which made such conditions possible and prevalent they hurled their anathemas.

Other factors added to this social discontent which made Socialism a reasonable answer to many Rochesterians. One of these was the long hours of labor, for the ten hour day was the minimum in Rochester along with the six day work week. The Socialists inveighed unhappily against the inequalities of wealth and income. They observed with distaste the anti-labor measures which were exercised by employers in this period, such as the lockout, the use of strikebreakers, injunctions, and the blacklist. They noted the combinations of employers organized to fight labor's demands. They were also sharply aware of the non-existence of the many social security features which we possess today.

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[4]Ibid., April 3, 1902.

The Socialist Spirit and Ideology

At the Century's Turn

A sermon by a powerful orator, Rev. William T. Brown, was delivered in Rochester's Plymouth Congregational Church expressing the idea that Christianity in the first century, democracy in the eighteenth century, and the abolitionist movement in the nineteenth century were the great movements in history, and that Socialism was the next great movement comparable to these.[5] This sentiment of being in the direct stream of social evolution was common among Rochester's Socialists around 1900.

A man and his pretty wife rode from town to town atop a wagon pulled by two horses, holding meetings on the street corners in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The man would sing and play the banjo, followed by a lecture by the man on Socialism and a recitation by the woman. For three years this "wagon mission" brought the message of Socialism to its listeners in hundreds of towns, large and small. To the accompaniment of the banjo the pretty woman would movingly and with much applause recite Casson's "Thanksgiving Song".[6]

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[5] Rochester Herald, February 4, 1901.

[6] Guy and Annie Lockwood, Wagon Mission Souvenir Pamphlet (1897-1900). This publication was in the collection of recently deceased Rochester Socialist, Carl Caspar, and is now in possession of the writer.

I'm thankful that the sun and moon
Are both hung up so high
That no rich robber's hand can stretch
And pull them from the sky.
If they hung low, I'm very sure
Some corporation ass
Would legislate to pull them down
And light the world with gas.

I'm thankful that the shining stars
Are beyond our reach,
And that the rolling planets too
Are deaf to human speech.
If they were not, I'm very sure
Rich men would own the skies
And manage this whole universe
By private enterprise.

I'm thankful that the God of all,
Whose laws we must obey,
Has changed his plan for making men
By making him from clay.
If he had not, it's very clear,
Twould be a doleful case.
Some man would form a big clay trust
And stop the human race.

This Socialist idyll was cherished by a Rochester Socialist as by Socialists elsewhere.

There was much idealism among the Rochester Socialists, romantic, Christian, and materialistic. An element of social pioneering was evident in their sentiment. There was a roughly-hewn ideology to whose main tenets nearly all could and did agree. But the strongest current was the current of protest. Socialists protested against the growing threat of an economic oligarchy in Rochester and the United States. They protested against the inequalities of wealth and opportunity, and against the corruption of government by wealth.

They protested the use of injunctions by courts against labor, and they criticised the prevailing use of the blacklist and lock-out by employers. Strong protests were lodged against the many aspects of economic insecurity, such as unemployment, business cycles and panics, and the lack of any provision for sickness, accident, and old age. The Spanish-American War unloosed a growing volume of protest against imperialism and war. The insidious growth of monopolistic practices by the trusts swelled the chorus of protest by the Rochester Socialists, though they were of one mind in saying that they desired the social ownership of the trusts rather than their destruction.

While participating in the labor movement of the city, Rochester's Socialists seem to have had a heavy hand laid upon them in the form of the blacklist. It was a formidable weapon. Its use was frequent, and sometimes it drove them out of the city to seek employment.[7] Despite this ever-present threat, and despite the absence of most of the security features which are

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[7]Personal interview, William Pidgeon, April 21, 1952, and Julius Hoesterey, April 7, 1952. Pidgeon told of his father, a Socialist, being blacklisted for four years by boot and shoe manufacturers for serving on a strike committee of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union. Likewise, Hoesterey's father, Julius Hoesterey, Sr., a Socialist and lithographer, had been blacklisted by lithographing plants in the city for many years and was forced to leave the city until his labor activity was forgotten.

now accepted as a matter of course in the nation's social welfare program. Socialist agitation in and out of the labor movement grew rather than diminished after 1900.

The ideology of the Socialist Labor Party members of Rochester and nationally was a European importation stemming from Karl Marx and somewhat refined by Daniel De Leon. It was dogmatic, "pure," and uncompromising Marxism. The party's approach was revolutionary, not evolutionary. Nevertheless, after the Socialist Party was formally organized in 1901 and prior to the death of De Leon in 1914, the Socialist Labor Party members did make common cause with the Socialist Party members in Rochester (and on the national level) and did have mutually advantageous relations. The Russian Revolution of 1917 ended this, however.

On the other hand, the ideology of the Socialist Party members was very flexible and more moderate than that of the Socialist Labor Party. The Socialist Party members of Rochester included revolutionary and evolutionary Socialists, Christian and materialistic Socialists, those who would control all the means of production and those who desired the control only of the great and leading industries, those who accepted the class struggle and those who rejected it, and those who would expropriate the wealth of present possessors and those who would compensate the present owners. The Socialist

Party also supported trade unions as then constituted, formulated immediate demands in their platform (unlike the Socialist Labor Party), and in conjunction with trade unions entered upon an educational program for raising the standard of living and the further democratization of industry. However, the Marxist credo was strongest and found most adherents in the party.

The Labor Lyceum

From 1897 to 1911 an organization known as the Labor Lyceum received permission to hold Sunday afternoon meetings at the Common Council chamber in City Hall. Officers of the organization were elected annually, and an advisory committee of prominent citizens of the city wielded a protective influence over its uncertain existence. It was through the meetings held weekly at the Labor Lyceum that the greatest public expression of the principles of socialism in Rochester came about. From the time these meetings began in 1897 until 1911 (in which year the organization was expelled from City Hall by Mayor Hiram Edgerton) it appears that the Socialists of the city had effective control of this organization.

When the Socialist Party in Rochester officially assumed an independent existence, it was able to gain control of the Labor Lyceum as a vehicle for the expres-

sion of its views.[8] This control, however, was not an iron-clad channeling of all discussion and debate exclusively to further the Socialist cause. Other parties presented spokesmen occasionally, numerous inter-party debates were sponsored, and the range of significant and educational topics discussed there was very wide. It is worthy of note, too, that while Socialist Labor Party members attended Labor Lyceum meetings, it is clear that the Socialist Party members were dominant in numbers and influence there.

The procedure of the Labor Lyceum was usually to present prominent speakers or have a paper prepared and read by one of its own members, following which a discussion and debate would take place. The nature of the subjects discussed generally attracted large audiences to these meetings, and the newspaper coverage of these sessions was infinitely greater than similar meetings

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[8]Rochester Herald, May 5, 1902. This paper tells of a meeting of the Labor Lyceum on the previous day at which officers for the next year were elected. It recounts that this business meeting closed the fifth year of its existence. All the officers and members of the executive committee listed as elected were members of the Socialist Party except for two members on the executive committee, whose party affiliation is not known. Officers reported as elected were: treasurer, William Erbacker; acting secretary, Erastus U. Ely; executive committee, Gad Martindale, Joel Moses, Mrs. Mabel Kennon, Frank Sieverman, M. Michaels, William Lippelt, William Hammond, J. L. Smyth, and Rev. William T. Brown. It is not certain whether or not Hammond and Smyth were Socialists, though it is probable they were.

sponsored by the Socialist Party in recent years.[9] Ministers, labor leaders, educators, politicians, and many men and women of great and little fame spoke at the Labor Lyceum in the course of its existence. The Labor Lyceum's influence upon a considerable number of individuals, the evidence reveals, was remarkably great.

Though the Labor Lyceum was one of the chief meeting places of Rochester's Socialists until 1911, it was certainly not the only one, as meetings were held in other halls scattered throughout the city.

The Structure of the Parties

When the Socialist Labor Party split at a meeting in New York City on July 8-10, 1899, the membership of the original party was cut in half.[10] This would mean that nationally the party had been reduced from a maximum figure of about 10,000 to 5,000 in 1899. The Rochester election returns in 1900 help to confirm this estimate, for the Socialist Party vote was nearly two and

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[9] Personal interview, William Pidgeon, Jr., April 21, 1952. Pidgeon said William Kirby, a Socialist Party member, was on the staff of the Rochester Herald at this time, and that this reporter was responsible for the Herald's relatively good coverage in the early years of the Socialist Party in Rochester and its sympathetic treatment of Socialist activities. The paper, however, was politically most sympathetic to the Democratic Party.

[10] Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, p. 582.

a half times the Socialist Labor Party vote.[11] In the city of Rochester, according to the testimony of a number of old Socialists, the Socialist Labor Party at no time after 1900 numbered more than a handful, estimates varying from a dozen to fifty members. The Rochester membership of the party held meetings in the Osborne House (now the Milner Hotel) on South Avenue.[12]

Falling in line with De Leon's program, Rochester members of the Socialist Labor Party were soon isolated from the labor movement and gave vent to attacks upon the established labor organizations of the city. This is made clear in a meeting of the Labor Lyceum on October 13, 1901, during the discussion following an address by a New York Socialist. Two Socialist Labor Party members, who had been conducting open air meetings on Water Street for some time, launched their attacks. One of them, Ephraim Harris, said, "There is no deliverance from class warfare until the workingmen join the Socialist Labor Party."[13] The other, Edward Markley, inveighed against "fake labor leaders," said that the labor papers

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[11] Official Canvass and Statement of Board of County Canvassers of Monroe County, N.Y., Election of 1900, Rochester Public Library, Rochester, N.Y.

[12] Personal interview, Warren Atkinson, July 1, 1952. Atkinson stated he attended some of their meetings at the Osborne House.

[13] Rochester Herald, October 14, 1901.

were "rot," and ended by saying that there were labor men in Rochester "with a union odor as strong as Bermuda onions."[14] Thomas Grady, a Socialist Party member, replied to these two men and ridiculed the idea of the Socialist Labor Party being the only real haven for workingmen.

The relations between the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party in the first decade (1900-1910) has been represented as follows:[15]

> ...factional bitterness had not become so intense as to prevent common action in the face of attack or on certain memorial occasions. On the first of May each year or at some special occasion in between, the combined radicals-- S. P.'ers, S. L. P.'ers, Wobblies, anarchists, left-wing unionists--forgot their differences for the evening to sing, dance, eat, and drink together for the Revolution. All could sing the Internationale.

From the time the Socialist Party was officially organized in 1901 to 1919 the history of Socialism in Rochester and the United States was to be preponderantly the history of the Socialist Party. Whereas up to World War I the Socialist Party on the national level enlisted its membership principally from the West and its leadership was definitely American,[16] in Rochester the party composition was largely from defined immigrant groups

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Lillian Symes and Travers Clement, Rebel America, p. 255.

[16] Ibid., pp. 222-223.

and the leadership was a fairly equal admixture of native and immigrant. With the ending of the geographical frontier for Americans and the resulting contraction of opportunities, with the tremendous inflow of immigration adding to this contraction, the two human streams, in their frustration and search for alternatives, merged and led to the growth of Socialism in America and in Rochester.

Authentic membership figures of Socialist Party membership in Rochester for the 1900-1905 period are unavailable and estimates are not very reliable. A rough deduction only can be made from 1900-1905 election results and from national membership totals. The national Socialist Party dues-paying membership has been stated by one of its founders as less than 10,000 at the time the Socialist Party was formed in 1901.[17] In 1903 it had increased to 15,975; in 1904, to 20,763.[18] Unlike the other political parties of the time, women were admitted to party membership on equal terms with men. According to Upton Sinclair, one of the Socialist Party's literary big guns, "a membership application signed by a member said he recognized the class struggle as a fundamental fact of present society and renounced other politi-

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[17]Morris Hillquit, Socialism Summed Up (H. K. Fly Co., New York, 1913), p. 144.

[18]Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, p.588.

dal parties."[19] If this was a fact, it is evident that many members who did not accept or support the class struggle principle of the party--and there was a considerable and influential number in Rochester and the country--did not consider it a prerequisite of membership or were left unchallenged.

The organization of the Socialist Party on the local, state, and national levels was democratic. Both state and national secretaries and seven-man executive committees were elected annually by direct vote of the members. The same was true in Rochester and Monroe County. The chairman of the Monroe County Social Democratic Party committee in 1900 was Philip Jackson, frequent chairman of the Socialist meetings at this time and foreman of a plant at 22 Exchange Street.[20] There was a city central committee, and many, if not all, of the city wards had Socialist ward clubs. Along with the county-city-ward organization of the party, the Socialist Party of Rochester was organized into four distinct branches: a German branch, the largest, a Jewish branch, second largest, a Polish branch, third, and an Italian branch.

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[19] Upton Sinclair, "The Socialist Party," World's Work, XI, (April, 1906), p. 7431. Quoted in P. L. Painter's, That Man Debs, (Indiana University, 1929) p. 87.

[20] Rochester City Directory for 1907 notes that he "removed to Europe."

The earliest central headquarters of the Socialist Party of Monroe County and Rochester of which there is any record was located at 40 State Street, which definitely existed in 1907 and probably prior to that date.

The exact date of differentiation into the four branches of the party is undetermined, but by 1911 they were evidently well established. The German branch was later to have its general headquarters at the Progressive Workers' Labor Lyceum Building at 580 St. Paul Street, while the Jewish branch met at the Jewish Workmen's Circle home at the corner of Joseph Avenue and Sullivan Streets. Where the Polish and Italian branches had their headquarters--if indeed they had separate quarters--has not been learned.

The majority of the Jewish Workmen's Circle membership in Rochester (it was a national organization) were Socialist Party members, most of them clothing workers.[21] Between 1900 and 1917 the Workmen's Circle Socialist activity was primary, while the fraternal aspect of the organization was a secondary adjunct.

The Socialist Party's platform for the year 1900, which Eugene Debs was prominent in framing, called for the social ownership of the means of production and con-

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[21] Personal interviews with Isadore Tishler (May 3, 1952) and Warren Atkinson (July 1, 1952), both Socialist Party members in the period covered by this account, supplied most of the information on the foreign language federations of the party.

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trol of natural resources, women's suffrage, a public work's program for the unemployed, reduction in hours of work, education of youth by the state up to eighteen years of age, and the organization of workers into a political party. It demanded national labor legislation, accident, unemployment, and old age insurance, and equal rights for women, both civil and political. It called for the initiative and referendum, proportional representation, and the recall. The abolition of war and the use of international arbitration was urged.[22]

Only by a small margin did immediate demands get into the party platform at the unity convention on July 29, 1901, at Indianapolis. The question at this convention, moreover, whether a farmer was a capitalist or not and thus should be supported or opposed, was considered important and divided the membership of the party.[23] An intra-party struggle also ensued on the position of the trade unions. A strong but defeated opposition was revealed in the convention when one bloc wanted to regard the trade unions as "carriers of the class struggle" and forerunners of an independent political party of workmen.

Until 1907 there was evidently no news organ of the Socialist Party of Rochester. Literature was pub-

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[22]F. R. Palmer, That Man Debs, p. 68.

[23]Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, pp. 586-588.

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lished nationally and was distributed in the city through the Rochester local. Morris Hillquit states that "in 1904 the Socialist Party was supported by about forty publications in different languages."[24] As yet there was no English daily Socialist paper, but the Appeal to Reason, a weekly published in Gerard, Kansas, found a great following nationally among the Socialists and non-Socialists alike. The foreign language newspapers were read by Rochester's Socialist foreign language federation members. Another link between Rochester and national Socialists as of 1904 were twenty-two field organizers paid by the party who maintained contact with the party's 1,600 locals.[25]

"Agitation, Education, and Organization" was preached by the Socialist Party throughout the country. By its press, by its street corner meetings, by its parades, and by its educational Labor Lyceum meetings in the Common Council chamber each Sunday afternoon, the Rochester Socialist Party brought the Socialist message to Rochesterians. Some voices rose in the pulpit, some in the schools, but most expressed themselves from within the ranks of organized labor. The Rochester newspapers amplified and often distorted this message.

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[24]Morris Hillquit, Socialism Summed Up, p. 104.

[25]Ibid.

Before a Labor Lyceum audience on January 21, 1900, William Lippelt, a tailor, short in stature, "one of the ablest Socialist leaders in the city," an orator of some prowess, was chastising Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward with a speech titled "Looking Forward." He was maintaining that Socialism could be brought about only through the class struggle and the working class.[26]

> ...When the beasts of burden are clamoring for a little higher wages, they are locked up in bull pens, if not shot dead; or are told: 'In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy daily bread....'
>
> The principal function of a government today is the organizing and maintaining of armies and navies to help the robber class in downing weaker nations...

He accused employers of curbing free speech. He argued that under Socialism educational purposes would "substitute for military." And he assured his listeners that, not human nature, but only the environment needed to be changed.

At a mass meeting at Fitzhugh Hall[27] on November 2, 1900, preceded by a parade of six hundred admirers from State Street to Platt to Fitzhugh Hall, the "hero of the Pullman Strike," Eugene Debs, was the speaker. Whenever Debs spoke only a few men, such as Bryan, could

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[26] Rochester Herald, January 22, 1900.

[27] Ibid., November 3, 1900. Fitzhugh Hall was located where the Colony Restaurant now stands, corner of Fitzhugh and Broad Streets. It was one of the most frequently used halls for political meetings in this period.

outrank him in the number of people who turned out to listen to him. In the parade were not only the two Socialist organizations of the city, but, significantly, several unions which were then strong in Socialist membership: Typographical Union No. 15, the Garment Workers' Union No. 36, the Glass Blowers Union, Boot and Shoe Workers' Union No. 15, and the Iron Moulders' Union No. 12. On the speaker's platform with Debs were Rev. William T. Brown, Socialist minister of Plymouth Congregational Church, Richard Kitchelt, Socialist, Philip Jackson, the county Socialist chairman at this time, and Frank A. Sieverman, Socialist labor leader in the city. Sieverman was chairman of the meeting.

First the Rev. William Brown, who was a Christian Socialist, gave three reasons in a brief speech for his support of Debs and the Socialists. They were (1) to realize democracy, (2) to "preserve and dispose of the gains of civilization,"[28] and (3) "to have freedom of thought and action and character growth, and the Social Democratic Party alone seeks the suffrage of the American people and promises to work intelligently for those ends."

As Upton Sinclair has written of Debs in The Jungle;[29]

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Upton Sinclair, The Jungle, (The Viking Press, New York, 1905), p. 324.

> ....He was a man of electric presence, tall and gaunt, with a face worn thin by struggle and suffering. The fury of outraged manhood gleamed in it--the tears of suffering little children pleaded in his voice. When he spoke he paced the stage, lithe and eager, like a panther. He leaned over, reaching out for his audience; he pointed into their souls with an insistent finger. His voice was husky from much speaking, but the great auditorium was as still as death, and everyone heard him.....

With the hall filled to capacity, with waves of applause, the "deep, rich voice" of Debs condemned the Republicans for doing nothing to restrain the growing trusts. He pictured the starvation among the anthracite coal miners and their families in the 1900 coal strike. He pointed to the effects of poverty on crime and compared industrial slavery to negro slavery. Regarding the trusts he said, "They would be a good thing for humanity if they were managed in the interests of the people."[30] And Debs on this occasion threw some of his thunderbolts. "The men who build Pullman cars do not ride in them. Andrew Carnegie would not have an income of $68,000 per day if he had not been able to exploit the labor of thousands of his fellows." He concluded with the plea that "it is better to vote right and be unsuccessful than to vote wrong and win.... The reformers who denounced chattel slavery are now revered and honored, not the rich men who apologized for the evil."[31]

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[30] Rochester Herald, November 3, 1900.

[31] Ibid.

In 1901 a Rochester Herald story told of the continuation of the Socialist agitation with a pre-election parade of the Socialist Party starting and ending at Schug's Hall, corner of Hollenbeck Street and Avenue A, with clubs participating from the second, third, fourth, and sixth election districts. The mass meeting which followed the parade at this seventeenth ward hall was addressed by Rev. William T. Brown, James Allman, Charles R. Bach, and Frank A. Sieverman.[32] From an early period in the party's Rochester history such ward or combined ward events were conducted quite frequently.

A pre-election mass meeting reported in the press as held at Fitzhugh Hall on November 1, 1902, featured John Spargo, prominent editor of the New York City Comrade and until 1917 one of the Socialist Party's heavy-weight literary figures. Frank Sieverman, Charles Bach, and an interesting Roman Catholic priest, Father McGrady, pastor of St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church of Bellevue, Kentucky, spoke with him. The Catholic priest had challenged his Archbishop to debate Socialism in any hall in the country and offered to pay the rental of the hall.[33]

Two thousand people greeted Debs when he made a return visit to Fitzhugh Hall on February 8, 1903. In-

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[32]Ibid., October 18, 1901.

[33]Ibid., November 1, 1902.

troduced by Philip Jackson, chairman of the meeting, Debs displayed "splendid voice," "epigrammatic style," "wit," "sarcasm," and "ridicule." He compared the Declaration of Independence to the "declaration" which Socialists were evolving then. Child labor was necessary, he maintained, in order to meet competition in manufacturing under the present system of industry. Socialism would organize one great cooperative trust, not destroy the trusts, he said. Again he spoke of the miners, who in 1902 had endured nearly six months of a protracted strike in which there was violence on the scale of a small civil war. Debs told his audience he had been in the mines, and then described the miners' poverty and declared they were "martyrs." He gave a social indictment of poverty and its relation to immorality. "Under the present system the owner of the system is the owner of the product," Debs asserted. "You wouldn't care to see me owning the sun, would you?" In a statement remarkably akin to one later made by a Rochester Socialist professor, which caused a furore when he made it, Debs envisioned the future thus: "Then we'll all be citizens of the world, not merely of one country."[34]

Fund raising had to be a part of party activity. Toward the expenses of the 1904 election campaign all Socialists in the country were asked to contribute one-

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[34] Rochester Herald, February 9, 1903.

half a day's pay. From the "Jimmie Higginses" (as the Socialist rank and file were called) $33,000 was raised for the campaign fund.[35] In this effort the Rochesterians undoubtedly played their part.

Electoral Record of the Socialist Parties

The new coalition made up of the rebels of the Socialist Labor Party and the Social Democratic Party succeeded in garnering a vote nearly three times the number for De Leon's Socialist Labor Party. The Social Democratic Party team of Debs and Harriman in 1900 received 94,768 votes to 32,751 obtained by the Socialist Labor Party candidates.[36] In Rochester the Social Democratic team of Debs and Harriman received 973 votes to 408 for the Socialist Labor Party candidates for president and vice-president.[37] It is interesting to note that the total Socialist vote at this time was a fraction more than four percent of the ballots cast in Rochester.

The election was a Republican sweep from the national to the local level. To achieve it the reluctant vice-presidential candidate, New York governor Theodore Roosevelt, campaigned far and wide on a plat-

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[35] Rochester Herald, February 9, 1903.

[36] Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, p. 583.

[37] Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement for 1900 Election.

form of prosperity." When he entered Rochester on October 30, 1900, it rained, and the parade and meetings held at Fitzhugh Hall and the Washington Rink were spoiled. But "Teddy" eulogized McKinley and accused the Democratic Party's candidate, Bryan, of keeping the Phillipine insurrection alive against the United States by his advocacy of Phillipine independence.[58] And Bryan, a definite deterrent to Socialist Party growth in these years by his absorption of Populist and other radical support, campaigned against imperialism, militarism, and the trusts--and kept the silver issue much alive. He raised the cry of "the constitution follows the flag" and posed the question, "Shall the American people stand for empire or republic?"[59] The "orator of the Platte" also came to Rochester during his campaign on October 19, 1900. Before an estimated 30,000 people on Main Street, Bryan delivered an oration from a balcony of the Powers Hotel. He spoke to another 20,000 at Fitzhugh Hall. In these speeches he denounced a large standing army, imperialism, and the trusts, and charged that English policy controlled American policy. He vowed to destroy monopoly. Bryan accused McKinley of acting "bigger than the Constitution." Finally, he declared for Phillip-

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[58] Rochester Herald, October 31, 1900.

[59] Ibid., July 11, 1900.

pine Independence.[40]

The cumulative kind of publicity regarding the Rochester Social Democratic Party in the 1900 campaign was initiated by a speech of W. M. Dana, the party's mayoralty candidate in 1899, at the Plymouth Congregational Church on the topic "Love and Sympathy: True Basis of Socialism."[41] Aiding this publicity were the Socialists William Lippelt, Mrs. Mabel Kennon (active suffragette in Rochester's Women's Political Equality League and a tireless campaigner for free textbooks in Rochester's public schools), Philip Jackson, and Richard Kitchelt. At the Labor Lyceum they debated such questions as the democratic character of the proposed legislative requirement for principals and teachers to be college graduates and the issue of free textbooks and academic freedom in the public schools.

A Republican congressional candidate, J. Breck Perkins, spoke at the Labor Lyceum on October 7, 1900. He vowed that the Republicans would regulate the trusts and said that the 1900 anthracite coal strike was "irrelevant to the election." The Socialists took him to task. Editorialized the Rochester Herald (a Democratic newspaper) in its news story: "When Frank Sieverman,

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[40] Ibid., October 20, 1900.

[41] Ibid., March 8, 1900.

Thomas Grady, and other Social Democrats (in discussion after the speech)....had finished with Mr. Perkins' 'full dinner pail' talk, there was not enough of it left to make a reason for voting the Republican ticket."[42]

Before a full house a pre-election debate was held at the Labor Lyceum, also, between a Democratic Party candidate, William McNamara, and Richard Kitchelt of the Social Democratic Party. McNamara said that the Democrats would destroy the trusts, that they opposed government by injunction, and that they urged the election of Bryan as the bearer of "a new Democracy born in 1896." Richard Kitchelt, one of the Socialists' most able platform speakers, questioned whether Bryan, if he destroyed the trusts, would be able to destroy monopoly, and then he outlined the evils of competition. He pointed out that the poorest wages were paid where the greatest competition existed. He told his audience about his being blacklisted by the Rochester clothing manufacturers for union activity. "Does Mr. Bryan carry a union card?" he asked his listeners.[43]

In Rochester the Republicans won all the city and county offices in the 1900 election. The Social Democrats from Rochester who ran for state and county

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[42]Rochester Herald, October 8, 1900.

[43]Ibid., November 5, 1900.

offices this year (and who were almost a Who's Who of Rochester Socialist Party leadership) were:[44]

Philip Jackson-------Secretary of State
Frank A. Sieverman---Comptroller
Charles R. Bach------Supreme Court Justice
Richard Kitchelt-----Representative in Congress
William Erbacker-----Senate (forty-third district)
Charles Zerenner-----Senate (forty-fourth district)
Morris Berman--------Assemblyman (first district)
Erastus U. Ely-------Assemblyman (second district)
Joel Moses-----------Special County Judge

Though Benjamin Hanford of Brooklyn was gubernatorial candidate and Henry Slobodin of New York candidate for attorney-general, it is noteworthy that in getting three candidates for state offices Rochester was well represented on the state slate. The deviation in the votes received by these candidates was not appreciably more nor less than that received by the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. The same is true of the Socialist Labor Party candidates from Rochester, who were not as prominent in their state slate as were the Rochester Social Democrats.

Only one Rochesterian, Lewis Harris, was a candidate of the Socialist Labor Party for a high state post, that of Justice of the Supreme Court. Other Rochesterians who were candidates of this party were:

Michael Sheehan---Representative in Congress
Robert Wetzel-----Senator (forty-third district)
Anton Metaler-----Senator (forty-fourth district)

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[44] Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement, Election of 1900.

Patrick Fox--------Assemblyman (first district)
Louis Bell---------Assemblyman (second district)
Frederick W. Frank-Assemblyman (third district)
Berthold Bauml-----Assemblyman (fourth district)
Carl A. Luedecke--Special County Judge[45]
John C. Vollertsen-Superintendent of the Poor

The last three persons named were the perennial Socialist Labor Party candidates from Rochester even when that party was declining.

Several changes in 1901 in the national picture affected the Rochester Socialists and their future. The Supreme Court had announced its decision by a five to four vote that the Constitution did not follow the flag in the "insular cases" on May 27, 1901. Thus American imperialism was confirmed by the highest court. More important still to the Socialists were the far-reaching effects of the shooting of President McKinley while attending the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition on September 6, 1901 by Leon Czolgosz, an anarchist. Shot twice the President died on September 14, 1901.

The killer had said, when he was apprehended after the shooting, that Emma Goldman, Rochester's most colorful anarchist, had influenced him through her writings. When she was arrested in Chicago by police on September 10, 1901, she denied ever advocating murder, said that she saw the killer once two months before, and asserted that she hardly knew him. The killer narrowly

[45]Carl A. Luedecke was an employee of Bausch & Lomb Co. at this time.

escaped lynching. Rochester was "draped in mourning."[46] Because Emma Goldman's home was in Rochester, and because she was thought to be in a conspiracy hatched in Rochester with Leon Czolgosz and other anarchists, Rochester became the scene of a first-class "radical" hunt. A grand jury investigation[47] was instituted in Rochester in the course of which the parents of Emma Goldman, Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Goldman, 175 Joseph Avenue, owners of a furniture store, as well as a sister of Emma, were thoroughly investigated. The latter confessed to being a "non-resistant" Tolstoian anarchist. Little more was uncovered concerning any conspiracy in Rochester, while Emma Goldman, after spending fifteen days in a Chicago jail, was released by Chicago police for lack of evidence.

The sympathy for President McKinley was tremendous throughout the country. Rochester newspapers excoriated Emma Goldman. A cartoon in the Rochester Herald showed her with long hair, wearing a pince-nez, and with stilettos beneath her picture. Her notoriety was easily transferred to Rochester Socialists. All radicals became lumped together in the public mind. The Socialist Party in Rochester became, through this process of identifica-

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[46] Rochester Herald, September 11, 1901.

[47] Ibid., September 24, 1901. Supreme Court Justice Davy, District Attorney Warren, and the police cooperated with the grand jury investigation on September 23, 1901.

tion, almost as notorious as the anarchists. Richard Kitchelt, a Socialist Party candidate for Congressman in the 1901 election, announced on November 24, 1901, at a meeting of the Labor Lyceum that he was quitting the party. He gave as one of his important reasons this identification with the anarchists.[48] Not long afterwards, however, he returned to the party fold.

The accession of the more aggressive Roosevelt to the presidency brought forth his policy for the national supervision and regulation of trusts, a long step away from laissez-faire, but not what the Socialists desired. And Roosevelt, in addition, was the advocate of the "big stick," the big navy, and, many thought, extension of American imperialism.

In the election of November 5, 1901, the Socialist Party showed no appreciable progress, while the Socialist Labor Party experienced a slight decline. Frank Zaches, running for President of the Common Council, ran ahead of the rest of the Socialist Party ticket with a vote of 1,035. However, the Republican Hiram Edgerton, the winner with 16,618 votes, and the Democrat John Burke, with 13,723 votes, placed victory far out of his reach. John C. Vollertsen of the Socialist Labor Party received only 392 votes. The Socialist

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[48] Ibid., November 25, 1901.

Party mayoralty candidate, Gad Martindale, a leader in the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union in Rochester for many years, garnered 1,017 votes against the Republican winner, Adolph Rodenbeck, who received 15,161 votes. Rodenbeck barely nosed out the Democratic candidate, George E. Warner, who obtained 15,089 votes. The Socialist Labor Party candidate, Carl Luedecke, received 381 votes. Other candidates of the Socialist Party for city and county offices fared even less well in the balloting.[49] The Socialist Labor Party submitted a city ticket which included most of their faithful coterie.[50] This election was a Republican victory, the party electing eleven out of the twenty councilmen, and taking most city, county, and state offices.[51]

In the year 1902 the Rochester Socialists carried on an energetic campaign which at the time of the election resulted in an upswing in votes for both Socialist parties, although the gap between the two parties in strength continued to widen. At Germania Hall the Social-

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[49]Some of these other candidates included: Mark Michaels, Philip Jackson, Mabel Kennon, Charles Swain, William Lippelt, Richard Kitchelt, Frank Sieverman, William H. Stevens, and Thomas Grady.

[50]Berthold Bauml, Frank W. Ruby, Bertha Luedecke (wife of Carl Luedecke), Rosa Bauml (wife of Berthold Bauml), Edward Markley, and Ephraim Harris.

[51]Rochester Herald, November 6, 1901.

ist Party candidate for governor, Benjamin Hanford, gave an "exhaustive exposition of Socialism"[52] in a hall filled to capacity. Also on the platform was Rochester's Charles Vail, candidate for Congress, and "accomplished in oratory." Both of them called for the "just apportionment of wealth" and expounded party platform and principles.[53] The next night Vail spoke again at a corner meeting at Main and North Water Streets. Two days later he spoke at the corner of Colvin and Campbell Streets. The eloquent ex-minister of the Plymouth Congregational Church, William T. Brown, Socialist Party candidate for lieutenant-governor, addressed a crowd at Shoemaker's Hall on September 16, 1902. The Fifth Ward Branch sponsored a mass meeting on September 25, 1902.[54]

For the first time in Rochester history in one of the wards, the seventeenth, the Socialist Party emerged as a real challenger to the Democrats and Republicans, most of the Socialist Party candidates receiving over six hundred votes while the two major party candidates received about nine hundred each.[55] The Rochester

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[52]Ibid., September 13, 1902. Germania Hall is now, in part, the headquarters building of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union on North Clinton Avenue.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid.

[55]Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement, Election of 1902.

Socialist preacher, William T. Brown, led the Socialist Party ticket in Rochester with a vote of 2,205, though the other party candidates were only a few votes behind. Interesting is the fact that the ward in which Rev. Brown had done his Sunday preaching, the third ward, gave him only forty-nine of these votes.[56] On the day after the election the Rochester Herald printed a picture of Rev. William R. Brown stating that he would "continue his work as a lecturer in the labor movement." There were two other Rochesterians who ran for state offices on the Socialist Party ticket in that year, Warren Atkinson for comptroller,[57] and Joel Moses for state treasurer. The latter was a recognized party leader in Rochester and operator of a tailoring business. Mark Michaels ran for State Senator, while Charles R. Bach sought a seat in the House of Representatives. These two men, with Gad Martindale and Mabel Rennon, were the chief Socialist Party candidates from Rochester for national, state, and county governments.

Daniel De Leon ran for the governorship this year and received 729 votes in Rochester, significantly less

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Charles Matchett of New York influenced Atkinson in joining the party. Coming to Rochester in 1912 from Brooklyn, Atkinson taught electricity at the Edison Technical High School until 1945, when he retired. He is still a Socialist Party member. (Personal interview, Warren Atkinson, July 1, 1952)

than other members of the Socialist Labor Party in the city. Congressional representative candidate of the party was Henry Engel, who got 817 votes, while county office candidates included: Charles and Bertha Luedecke, Berthold and Rosa Bauml, Louis Bell, Lewis Harris, Robert C. Wetzel, and John C. Vollertsen.[58]

In the 1902 election the Republicans won the governorship and the state legislature, though the Democrats made gains in the legislature. The Republican pluralities were narrow in Rochester and Monroe County. The total Socialist vote, however, had risen to approximately ten percent of all the votes cast in Rochester.

The election of the next year, 1903, brought a still greater voting strength to the Socialist Party, while most of the Socialist Labor Party candidates failed to win even four hundred votes, a new low. The Rochester Herald states that the Rochester Socialist Party made a "strenuous campaign" in 1903.[59] The result was to raise its vote totals to between 2,300 and 2,400 for their candidates for the principal city offices. For the office of Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals, Charles Matchett of New York received 3,917 votes in the city against Daniel De Leon's 910. In the Special County Judge race, the Socialist Party candidate, Fred H. Van

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[58] Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement, Election of 1902.

[59] Rochester Herald, November 4, 1903.

Aiken, made an exceptionally good showing with 2,897 votes as against the Socialist Labor Party candidate, Lewis Harris, who garnered only 415 votes. For mayor Charles R. Bush was the Socialist Party candidate, John A. Logie run for president of the Common Council, while Charles Zeremner was named for city treasurer. Among the Socialist Labor Party candidates were [illegible] Henry Engel---mayor, John C. Vollerston---president of Common Council, Anton Metzler---city treasurer [illegible]. A feature of the election was the close race in the seventeenth ward, where Frank Sieverman, Socialist Party and labor leader, running for alderman, challenged the other two contenders. The Democratic candidate received 1,048 votes, the Republican, 923 votes, and the Socialist, Sieverman, 896 votes.[60] However, by a thousand to several thousand votes the Republicans won the city, except for the Common Council, where the Democrats were able to win eleven wards to nine for the Republicans. Nevertheless, the fortunes of the Socialist Party were rising year by year. When the election of 1904 was passed, it seemed that the Socialist Party had reached maturity. Debs and Hanford had been nominated by acclamation by the second convention of the Socialist Party.

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[60] Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement, Election of 1903.

held at Chicago on May 1, 1904.[61]

The Republicans nominated Roosevelt, and the Secretary of War, William Howard Taft, did much of the campaigning in his behalf. Judge Alton B. Parker of New York, a change from Bryanism, campaigned with Senator Carl Schurz on a platform opposing imperialism, favoring a reduction in the tariff, legislation to solve the trust problems, and in favor of Phillipine independence. While this campaign was proceeding the Russian-Japanese war was also proceeding.

In Rochester the Labor Lyceum, meeting in the Common Council, kept its Socialist sounding board vibrating with the Socialist message. On October 16, 1904, in a "spirited address" titled "What Socialism is Not," Phillip Jackson met the attacks made upon the more extreme Socialists with the Socialist Party's "centrist" position. He maintained that Socialism was not opposed to all private property, nor to the home, nor to marriage. Instead, he argued, under Socialism marriage would be made possible for many unmarried persons; the more equitable distribution of wealth would enable men to have more homes; and, lastly, crime would be eliminated.[62]

In 1904 Debs and Hanford increased the national

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[61] F. R. Painter, That Man Debs, p. 87.

[62] Rochester Herald, October 17, 1904.

Socialist Party vote to 402,400 from the 94,768 total in 1900. One historian said of this result: "The increase....in 1904 occasioned much anxiety in conservative quarters and emphasized the need for a thorough reorganization of the machinery and aims of the old parties."[63] Socialism was definitely on the upswing. Moreover, the Socialist Party was becoming more confident that it would be just a few years before it would pass from the position of the country's third party to being the first.

Two Rochesterians, Carl Casper and John Zaches,[64] were among the Socialist Party presidential electors in company with such national figures as Professor George D. Herron, Morris Hillquit, Leonard D. Abbott, and others. The total votes for presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the two Socialist parties in Rochester, however, were slightly lower than the votes of 1903 for state and county offices. Debs and Hanford received 2,104 votes, while the Socialist Labor Party candidates received 304.

The Socialist Labor Party failed to receive 10,000 votes in the 1904 election in the state of New

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[63]Asa Earl Martin, History of the United States, Ginn and Company, New York, 1928), V. II, p. 468.

[64]John Zaches is now a vice-president of the C. I. O. Council in Rochester and a member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union.

York and thus lost its right to be recognized as a political party. The automatic listing of the party on the ballot ended, making it necessary for the party to get independent nominations by the arduous means of petitions for each subsequent election.[65] This the Socialist Labor Party succeeded in doing after the 1904 election, though frequently it hereafter submitted only partial slates. Daniel De Leon's candidacy for the governorship, with Boris Reinstein for lieutenant-governor, and Anton Metzler, Rochester's representative on the slate, for secretary of state, appealed to only about 300 voters in Rochester. Undoubtedly this low Rochester and state vote was a great blow to the party and aided in its further decline. The Socialist Party probably salvaged a fraction from the dwindling membership of the Socialist Labor Party.

For the office of lieutenant-governor Charles R. Bach of Rochester was the Socialist Party candidate, the city giving him 1,980 votes. Gad Martindale, running for representative in Congress, did better with 2,035 votes. Joel Moses, candidate for Senator, got 1,193 votes. Frank Sieverman, William Erbacker, and John E. O'Rourke were among the Socialist Party's other city candidates.

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[65] Rochester Herald, October 14, 1905.

Among the Socialist Labor Party candidates were

Charles A. Ruby----State Senator
Carl A. Luedecke----Assemblyman
John C. Vollertsen--Assemblyman
Robert Wetzel-------Representative

Only Berthold Bauml was a presidential elector from Rochester for the Socialist Labor Party.[66]

The Socialist Party of Rochester vote totals, however, were only about ten percent of that gained by the winning Republicans, while the Socialist Labor Party vote totals in Rochester were less than two percent. The Republicans in 1904 won in the nation and in the state of New York by large pluralities. All the wards in the city were carried by Roosevelt except the twentieth ward. To the evident surprise of all, the Republicans had won by a landslide. The Republicans and Socialists had gained at the expense of the Democrats.

Rochester Socialists and Labor (1900-1905)

While the Socialists were subjecting capitalism to a persistent attack, they were in this early period also working with trade unionists for a higher standard of living, for justice to labor--not paternalism or charity-- and insistently pointing out that employers must recognize their social responsibilities to their employees. As this fight continued and industrial respon-

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[66] Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement, Election of 1904.

sibility became more recognized, only then did the class struggle concept relax its hold and begin to be abandoned by workers. Many American Socialists themselves became more moderate in their demands, demanding only the socialization of the great and leading industries rather than all the means of production.

When the president of the Central Trades and Labor Council was interviewed on April 15, 1902, he said that the membership of the Council at that time was nearly 8,000, and that "there are 59 trades represented in the Rochester Council....five delegates from each trade."[67] In this same interview he admitted that there were "many members of trade unions numbered among its (Socialist Party's) adherents."

Not long after the American Federation of Labor was officially organized in 1886 the Rochester Trades Assembly was organized in 1888, with headquarters in the Reynolds Arcade. From the Rochester Trades Assembly developed the Central Trades and Labor Council. When in 1900 organized labor paraded down Main Street on Labor Day, it was estimated that there were over 4,000 workers in the parade.[68]

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[67] Rochester Herald, April 15, 1902. Rochester labor outside the Council would include the independent railroad brotherhoods, International Machinists, Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, and Garment Workers' Union.

[68] Rochester Herald, September 3, 1900.

In 1900 the Socialists were active nationally in labor as is evident from a resolution introduced into the American Federation of Labor convention meeting at Louisville, Kentucky, on December 2, 1900. This resolution called for the American Federation of Labor's one and one-half million members to support the Socialist Party. A referendum was considered by the convention.[69] Nationally the Socialists were strong among the 150,000 workers in the United Mine Workers' Union, which carried on a violent strike in 1900 under the leadership of John Mitchell, a non-socialist. The union won a ten percent wage increase and recognition of grievance committees despite an attempt to reopen the mines under the protection of the state militia. Early American Federation of Labor goals were parallel with the Socialist Party's immediate demands in many respects and included abolition of child labor, regulation of women's labor, workmen's compensation laws, reduction of work hours, better working conditions, sickness and unemployment compensation, and free public education.

Rochester labor in 1900 was far from quiescent. In that year there was a strike of the Electrical Workers' Union for higher wages, of the freight handlers of the Central Railroad, and of Bell Telephone employees.

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[69] Ibid., December 10, 1900.

There were also two strikes of the Laborers' Union. The Rochester branch of the International Machinist's Union agitated for the eight hour day. In the Bell Telephone strike of June 6, 1900, strikebreakers were brought into the city but refused to take the strikers' places.[70]

An interesting mass meeting at Shoemaker's Hall on February 26, 1901, was addressed by Samuel Gompers under the auspices of the Central Trades and Labor Council and the International Machinists. Two reasons were assigned for his presence in Rochester; first, to attempt to get the eight hour day for the clothing and shoe workers in Rochester, and, secondly, to try to organize the workers in the Eastman and Brownell Kodak factories." Chairman of the meeting was Harry Sherman, president of the Electrical Workers' Union. Gompers made a plea for labor unity, the eight hour day, and "year round work." He also urged that men and women join unions.[71]

The Rochester Socialists were most prominent and active in the clothing and shoe trades, were in a strong position in the International Machinists Union, and, along with organized labor in general in Rochester, were exceedingly interested in promoting the unionization of the Eastman and Brownell plants. From that time to this

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[70] Ibid., June 6, 1900.

[71] Ibid., February 27, 1901, 3, 1.

the Eastman Kodak Company has been the Gibraltar fortress which, if taken by organized labor, would probably insure the fall of the remainder of the city of Rochester to union labor. However, Rochester's Gibraltar still stands.

Rochester Socialists evinced much interest in the 1902 anthracite coal miners' strike involving 125,000 men. It was exceptionally explosive in violence and lasted 162 days. The strike involved the flooding of the mines, the importation of strikebreakers, the use of the boycott, jailing of United Mine Workers of America officials, calling out of the National Guard, coal and iron police violence, relief funds for the miners, and the labor injunction. The miners sought a wage increase, recognition of their union, the eight hour day, and a contract embracing wages, conditions of work, and grievance machinery. Though they offered arbitration, the miners were rebuffed several times.

The strike started on May 19, 1902. Not until September 30, 1902, did Roosevelt consent to attempt to settle the deadlock. It may be that Roosevelt got wind of the plank adopted by the New York State Democrats at Saratoga Springs calling for the government ownership of the anthracite mines. At any rate, the President initiated conferences through Elihu Root with the coal magnates.[72] The American Federation of Labor offered the

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[72]Rochester Herald, October 3, 1902.

United Mine Workers of America one and one-half million dollars a week on the basis of a one dollar assessment per week, or about fifteen dollars per week per striker, to be ready on call. Mitchell accepted and agreed to use this as needed.[73] Chief adversary of the miners was George Baer, president of the Reading Coal Company.

Finally, after agreement of coal operators and miners' leaders, a six-man arbitration commission was appointed by Roosevelt and approved by the two contending parties. The miners returned to work on October 21, 1902. Four months after this the commission awarded a wage increase of ten percent, the work day was reduced from ten to nine hours per day, union discrimination was forbidden, and a board of conciliation was set up for settling future disputes. The board was made up of three representatives from each party.

In its editorial of October 4, 1902, the Rochester Herald advocated the governmental ownership of the anthracite mines and denounced the Rochester Post-Express for advocating the employment of military power by the governor of Pennsylvania to suppress violence there. Four days later Governor Stone called out seven thousand state troops "to guard men who want to work." Mayor Rodenbeck of Rochester initiated the rationing of coal by city

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[73] Ibid., July 9, 1902.

dealers in early October. A week later he was proposing the use of coal from the schools, closing down the schools, and giving the coal to the poor of the city to prevent them from freezing.[74] Bituminous coal, not available in large amounts, was replacing anthracite coal and the gas company sold coke to the poor by the bushel.[75]

After spending a week in the coal strike area, Benjamin Hanford, Socialist Party candidate for governor, spoke at Fitzhugh Hall on October 14, 1902. To the Rochester Socialists he gave a report on the strike. He stated that the coal operators wanted martial law declared in the strike regions and gave a description of the strikebreaking there. He expressed his satisfaction at the "good fellowship among the miners." In conclusion, he called for the social ownership of the nation's natural resources. Following the speech a collection was taken for the striking miners.[76]

Capitalizing on the interest in the strike, the Socialist Party followed with two other meetings in quick succession, one held in Saucke's Hall, corner of Clifford and Atwood Streets, on October 17, and another the follow-

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[74] Ibid., October 10-11, 1902.

[75] Rochester Herald, October 15, 1902.

[76] Ibid.

ing evening at Burbott's Hall at the corner of Colvin and Campbell Streets.[77] "The Lessons Contained in the Late Coal Strike" was discussed by Frank A. Sieverman before the Labor Lyceum on October 26, 1902. There was a large audience. Such was the tenor of his remarks:[78]

> ...The strike is an example of the class struggle .....The old parties have no interest in labor; both represent the capitalist class.. ...Roosevelt intervened only when a general industrial shut-down was threatened due to the lack of coal.

When on April 15, 1902, the Central Trades and Labor Council president, F. L. Calligan, was approached about the possibility of the trade unions putting a municipal ticket into the field in Rochester, he said politics and trade unionism did not mix. He also demurred by saying that the Central Trades and Labor Council constitution would have to be changed in order to affiliate with any political party. This was typical of the timid American Federation of Labor approach to politics in the period.[79]

In this same year the Western Labor Union (of which the union of the Western Federation of Miners was

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[77]Ibid., October 27, 1902.

[78]Rochester Herald, October 27, 1902.

[79]Ibid., April 16, 1902. The Herald itself proposed that a municipal political party could be organized by labor regardless of this constitution.

most prominent) of 150,000 "industrial" unionists" endorsed the Socialist Party and its objectives. Except for John Mitchell, who publicly disavowed being a Socialist, "the leaders of the United Mine Workers were socialists."[80] Moreover, according to one historian of American radicalism, "the socialists dominated some of the most powerful international unions, such as the Machinists, and state federations, such as Illinois."[81]

When the American Federation of Labor convention met in New Orleans on November 18, 1902, the socialists led by Victor Berger of Milwaukee submitted a resolution which, among other things, issued a call for "the working people to organize their economic and political strength to secure for labor the full equivalent of its toil and to overthrow the wage system." The resolution, challenging the conservative American Federation of Labor leadership and policy, was narrowly defeated by a vote of 3,744 to 3,444.[82] By a small margin, also, a resolution fathered by Berger for pensions to be paid by the United States government to all workers over

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[80] Lillian Symes and Travers Clement, Rebel America, p. 224.

[81] Ibid., p. 224.

[82] Ibid., p. 223. Victor Berger was a delegate of the Milwaukee Federated Trade Council as well as a national committeeman of the Socialist Party at this time.

sixty was defeated after "angry debate" in the Committee on Resolutions by a vote of ninety-four to eighty-five, despite the fact that "all the influence of the officers was thrown against it."[83] Thus the Socialists kept trying to turn the American labor movement down the road of some form of collectivism, the importance of which in the history of the United States would have been tremendous in its consequences and implications.

In 1903 similar attempts to gain control of the policy of the United Mine Workers and the American Federation of Labor were made, but with a wider margin being won for the advocates of politically independent union members. At the Indianapolis convention of the United Mine Workers of America on January 23, 1903, the Iowa local introduced a resolution which aimed "to commit the mine workers squarely to the doctrine of international Socialism." It was defeated, but over two hundred delegates voted for the proposal. The socialists proposed the establishment of cooperative stores by the miners, and this too was similarly defeated.[84]

At the American Federation of Labor convention of November 18, 1903, in Boston, Max Hayes of Cleveland, the Socialist Party leader and Cleveland labor editor, introduced a resolution calling for the organization of

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[83] Rochester Herald, November 19, 1902.

[84] Ibid., January 24, 1903.

labor along class lines and the organization of economic and political power of labor along class lines and interest. Hayes' resolution was defeated by a 2,185 vote to 1,282. Other Socialist-sponsored resolutions were also defeated. Mitchell and Gompers expressed opposition to "socialistic ideas" being presented at the convention. Both advocated an independent political role for union members. Mitchell, however, "gave credit to the Socialists for what they did for the miners."[85]

A very significant and apparently important event took place in the annals of Rochester labor and the Socialist Party in 1903, but it was ignored by the Rochester press, and even the few old Socialists and labor leaders still living have no recollection of it. The following headline appeared in the Rochester Herald for March 3, 1903:

ENTER PROTEST

Socialists and Trades Unions
Against Water Company
They Adopt Resolutions

Philip Jackson Says Now That The
City Is Making a Little Money Out
of Its Water Plant a Private
Corporation Wants to Slip in and
Gobble Up All Of the Profits.

The story after this headline dealt with a joint meeting of the Socialist Party and the Central Trades

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[85] Rochester Herald, November 19, 1903.

and Labor Council on March 2, 1903, in the Common Council chamber. It had been called to make a protest against the admission into the city of a competing and private water company. Rochester owned its own water system at this time. Chairman of the meeting was Frank A. Van Auken, an active Socialist Party member. Joel Moses, a "rough-and-tumble orator," as one old Socialist remembers him,[86] made a motion which led to the passage of a remarkable resolution.

First it said that a company promoted by Mingle, Harris and Harris was trying "to get entrance into the city of Rochester to compete with the municipally owned system." The resolution charged that the privately owned system of Ithaca was responsible for a typhoid epidemic there, that "profits under private ownership were more important than the welfare of the citizens," and that the State Board of Health had said that the Ithaca epidemic was due to the priority of private over the public interest. It continued with a statement that Rochester was adequately and efficiently managing its water supply and warned that "no private corporation shall be allowed to compete with the Rochester water works system." The two organizations then denounced George W. Archer, Frederick Cook, the Honorable H. C.

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[86] Personal interview, William Pidgeon, Jr., April 21, 1952. Joel Moses, a tailor, died only a few years ago.

Brewster, and others "who are lacking in public or civic pride and lend their influence toward betraying the interests of the citizens of Rochester into the hands of a private corporation which wishes to capture the water works system." Lastly, and from the Socialist standpoint most important, came this part of the resolution:

> Fourth: That this meeting not only endorses the municipally owned water works system, but also recommends that the city shall own its own street railways, gas, and electric plants. We also recommend the nationalization or public ownership of the telegraph and telephone lines, railways, coal mines, factories, and all public utilities; in short, the collective ownership by all the people of all the means of production and distribution of all social necessities.

The Rochester Herald, which carried this story, evidently missed the import of this resolution or deliberately chose to ignore it, as was done by the other papers.

Philip Jackson, veteran Socialist of Rochester, made a statement at this meeting that Rochester had owned its water system for thirty years. Two other Socialists, Charles Bach and William Lippelt, made brief speeches at the meeting.[87] This particular resolution

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[87] There were two sequels to this meeting. One was the very same day when Ithaca voted for public ownership of its water supply by a vote of nearly 1,400 to thirty opposed. (Rochester Herald, March 4, 1903). The other was a decision by the state supreme court on May 26, 1903, which stated that, while a private water company could lay pipes through city streets to supply surrounding towns, it could not sell water in the city. (Rochester Herald, May 27, 1903).

was in conflict with an American Federation of Labor convention resolution passed later in this year at Boston on a similar issue.

The strongest adversary of Rochester labor and the Socialist Party, also, was organized in 1903. Two ambitious attorneys, Wile and Ovlatt, who had promoted such organizations as the Clothiers' Exchange, Rochester Metal Trades Association, the Woodwork Manufacturers' Association, and the Rochester Boot and Shoe Manufacturers' Association, organized "over two hundred employers," all manufacturers, into the Allied Trades of Rochester. Some of the published objectives of this organization are revealing. They intended "to protect themselves against the unjust demands of union labor," insure the "independence of the employer," and "every member was to determine the competency of men he employs, and to hire whom he pleases, union or non-union without discrimination." The promoters of the organization also added that it sought "to prevent employees from becoming too arrogant and arbitrary in their demands on employers."[88] Here was the business community in its most ruthless, socially irresponsible, and autocratic posture.

As the nation-wide National Association of Manu-

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[88] Rochester Herald, May 16, 1903. On May 28, 1903, the Rochester Stock Exchange was organized by Rochester brokers. (Ibid., May 29, 1903).

facturers was being organized at this time, the Rochester group of manufacturers planned to affiliate. A road block was thus set up to the unionization of Rochester labor, but it was not insurmountable. While Rochester has been reputedly an "open shop town," unionization has made great strides in the city since the organization of the Rochester manufacturers in 1903.[89] The Socialist Party from this date forward had a powerful opponent for its attacks. It had a symbol (along with the Chamber of Commerce) to represent all that it opposed.

Since Eugene Debs' American Railway Union was nearly destroyed in the 1893-1894 strike by the first use of the labor injunction under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, labor throughout the country had been plagued with judicial action. Rochester was no exception. In 1903 the Machinists and Carpenters' Unions had two injunctions brought against them by Rochester Manufacturers' associations. To fight these legal battles for labor, it was decided on June 4, 1903, that the Central Trades

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[89] In a report made to the Community Chest for May 1, 1951, giving payroll figures regarding employees on a union and non-union basis, industrial plants of Rochester revealed this status of Rochester labor:

Plants	On Payroll
95 (union)	36,076 (union)
54 (non-union)	56,963 (non-union)
149 total	93,039 total

(Source: Julius Hoesterey, Jr., chairman of the 1951 C. I. O.'s Committee for Community Chest.)

and Labor Council would hire a permanent counsel.[90]

All Socialists were opposed to injunctions used against labor. To outlaw the use of injunctions against unions was one of the immediate demands set forth in the platform of the Socialist Party, and Rochester Socialists were loud and vocal in and out of organized labor's ranks in their opposition to this method, as they saw it, by which the government machinery was weighted in the scales on the side of employers.

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[90] Rochester Herald, June 5, 1903.

CHAPTER III

SOCIALISM IN RELIGION IN ROCHESTER (1900-1908)

Scope and Impact

From the standpoint of numbers of ministers in Rochester churches, there were relatively few who were socialists. Yet they were a highly vocal and influential few. As far as can be learned, there were none in the Catholic or Jewish churches in Rochester. All were from Protestant denominations.

Literate, intelligent, and individualized expressions of Christian Socialism came from these Protestant clergymen. Several were exceedingly original and profound in their thinking and exerted an influence beyond the city's limits. Not one of them seems to have adopted the strictly Marxian variety of Socialism, but each adopted a modification of it to conform to his own individual interpretation of the life and teachings of Christ as related to the real and troubled world. Each of them had been influenced by the social gospel as developed by many clergymen in America in the last half of the nineteenth century.

There is no question of the strong and general influence exerted by these Rochester clergymen among the

iality within and without their churches. Testimony is not lacking among Socialists and non-Socialists alike on this point. Their calibre as a group of remarkable men is attested to by practically everyone who knew them or heard them.

From the Rochester Theological Seminary came the voice and pen of Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, whose views gained him widespread respect in Rochester and a national reputation. First a Baptist clergyman, he became a professor of church history at the Seminary. In 1897, when Rauschenbusch returned to Rochester from a pastorate in New York City, he founded a Brotherhood of the Kingdom chapter in Rochester. Among other things the Brotherhood advocated Christian Socialism. To Walter Rauschenbusch must be given the credit for being probably the greatest and most brilliant of the social gospel exponents in America, for he gave to the social gospel its most articulate and learned expression.

Through thought and study Rauschenbusch arrived at the conviction that Christ had striven and suffered for the realization of His idea of a Kingdom of God on earth. This Kingdom of God was viewed by Rauschenbusch as in fact standing for the "social gospel." It was "humanity organized according to the will of God."[1] Pro-

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[1]Walter Rauschenbusch, A Theology For The Social Gospel, (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1919), p. 142.

fessor Rauschenbusch saw with Johann Fichte that Christ was conscious of human and divine life being one and the same thing. The role of the Church, therefore, Rauschenbush said, was to express and live for the Kingdom of God. In and out of the Church Christians must fight evil by this Christian conception of the Kingdom of God.

In socialism Rauschenbusch saw "by far and away the most powerful force for justice, democracy, and organized fraternity in the modern world."[2] He also saw some of its weaknesses. Adopting a combination of Fabian and Christian Socialism, Rauschenbusch sought to implement his religious-oriented social thinking by founding the Brotherhood of the Kingdom in Rochester.[3]

Among those who became members of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom chapter in Rochester were Reverend Paul Moore Strayer, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church, Herbert S. West, West High School principal and for a number of years the assistant superintendent of schools of Rochester, Dores R. Sharpe, a Baptist minister who was Rauschenbusch's secretary for many years and later his biographer, John Strong, and William Pidgeon.

Next to Rauschenbusch in stature in this group

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[2]Dores R. Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1942), pp. 219-220.

[3]Two other chapters were also founded, one in Boston and the other in Los Angeles.

of socialist ministers in Rochester was probably the Reverend William T. Brown, pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church at the corner of Troup Street and Plymouth Avenue.[4] During the pastorate of Reverend Brown at this church, the doors were wide open to every kind of forum on social problems. The Socialists of Rochester converged frequently on Plymouth Church as the pulpit sermons became more and more socialistic. Nationally known Socialists spoke at Plymouth Church as well as radicals of other varieties. Plymouth Church became a center of social radicalism in the city of Rochester for about five years. This ended abruptly in July of 1902.

The Reverend Paul Moore Strayer, pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church, was most prominent in the chairmanship of the Brotherhood meetings held by the Rochester chapter. An able speaker, he assisted Professor Walter Rauschenbusch in the conduct of the monthly meetings of the Brotherhood in which a part of the meeting was devoted to the discussion of socio-religious topics. The Reverend Strayer's efficient handling of these meetings had much to do with their success and popularity. Rauschenbusch's able, trenchant replies to questions addressed to him by the audience in these

[4] The church is now called the Plymouth Spiritualist Church.

Brotherhood meetings is also well remembered.[5]

In individual ways did these ministers of the gospel contribute to the socialism of Rochester, though they also occasionally banded together for other common purposes. Their thought, their activity in the community, and their writings gave these men recognition and notoriety in their churches and community.

Walter Rauschenbusch, born in 1861, attended the University of Rochester and the Rochester Seminary. At the age of twenty-five he began serving his ministry in a tenement district on the west side of New York City. Here for eleven years, as pastor of a German Baptist Church, he was exposed to the conditions and acquired the empirical basis which led to his espousal at an early date of socialism. At first he supported Henry George, the single taxer, whose views on unearned land income and social property values appealed to Rauschenbusch. With Jacob Riis, then fighting for playgrounds for children in New York City, Rauschenbusch joined hands for reform. As early as 1889, however, he became an editor of a magazine titled For The Right, which preached Christian Socialism. The first Brotherhood of the Kingdom organization was founded by Rauschenbusch while he

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[5]Rauschenbusch was under a great handicap, however, for he was deaf and had to have the questions relayed to him through his son.

was still in New York City in 1892. Included in this group was Nathaniel Schmidt, later a Cornell University professor who frequently spoke at Rochester's Brotherhood meetings on biblical subjects.

In 1897 Rauschenbusch returned to Rochester Theological Seminary as a teacher in the German Department. From 1902 until 1918, when he died, he taught church history at the seminary as a full professor. His official biographer tells us that, except for his hearing impediment, he might have risen to be the president of the seminary during his lifetime.

In two speeches delivered by Rauschenbusch in Rochester in 1901, he has made clear his thinking in regard to socialism and socialists. In essence these speeches are a critique of the Socialist Labor Party or dogmatic Marxist view of socialism as well as of the most radical element in the Socialist Party.

The first of these addresses was at the Labor Lyceum in the Common Council chamber on February 24, 1901, on the topic "Dogmatic and Practical Socialism." In this first noteworthy speech Rauschenbusch gives his support to immediate demands and reforms as practical socialist strategy and opposes "catastrophe as means,"[6] i.e., the violent overthrow of the government. While making these reservations, he admitted that he accepted the "general

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[6]Dores Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 203-216.

theses of Marxian socialism." Both revolutionary overthrow and exclusion of immediate demands were espoused by the Socialist Labor Party, a group whom Rauschenbusch doubtlessly embraced in his term "dogmatic socialists."

He compared to Millenarians the dogmatic socialists who ignored land reforms, the public ownership of natural monopolies, and denounced trade unionism, and who refused to do anything about changing the world today while awaiting the millenium. He disagreed with Marx's theory of surplus value of labor as being the source of all exploitation of labor, stating that land and labor were of equal importance. Declaring that the dogmatic socialists emphasized the proletariat and overlooked the farmer and small businessman, Rauschenbusch put his finger on another Marxian foible. Seeing "no impending collapse of the social order, as the dogmatic socialists expect," he noted that the middle class had not disappeared as predicted by Marx and that the extremes of rich and poor were getting closer together rather than wider apart as Marx predicted. Indicating that on these two counts the material conditions were not present for the overthrow of the government, and that the socialists were not yet numerous in America, Rauschenbusch asserted that socialist dogma did not assert revolutionary overthrow of the government "until the majority of the people are in sympathy." His prescience did not

include the knowledge of Lenin's technique of the disciplined, small, hard core of dedicated revolutionaries who staged a successful revolution in 1917.

Since the "dogmatic socialists" were not interested in immediate reforms and anticipated a speedy world-revolution, Rauschenbusch posed the question as to what these socialists would do in the event of a long period of development toward revolution. He flatly stated, "the idea of profiting by the miseries of the people is suicidal." Envisioning the situation in the event that capitalism would not collapse for a long time, Rauschenbusch said that some preparation had to be made in the period of transition. He thought a rough organization was needed "to organize industry and commerce when and if the revolution takes place." He foresaw that "running an industrial democracy is harder than running a political democracy."

Rauschenbusch advocated "gradual socialism." To implement his views regarding practical socialism, he outlined a program of immediate and specific reforms. He would put a tax on economic rent, i.e., on unearned land values, social values. (Here probably is the Henry George influence.) There would be municipal ownership of water, gas, electricity, power, and roads. Public control of express and telegraph business would be adopted. Education, libraries, museums, parks, play-

grounds, baths, etc., would be greatly extended. A "steeply graduated inheritance tax" would be initiated. Trades would be organized so that, first, wages and working conditions could be improved and, second, there would be a rudimentary social organization for the eventual management of industry. Labor legislation, he thought should be enacted for shorter hours, improvement of conditions of labor, for prevention of child labor, and for restriction of women's labor.

A few weeks later, on March 13, 1901, Professor Rauschenbusch made a speech before the Plymouth Church Guild on "Socialism: Dogmatic And Practical." Either this was the same speech as delivered by him previously before the Labor Lyceum or a similar speech which incorporated some changes. In any event, the two speeches as recorded by the two different city newspapers were evidently not identical. In this speech before the Reverend William T. Brown's congregation, Rauschenbusch repeated some of his views expressed to the Labor Lyceum audience, but there were also new ideas and amplifications, too.

He urged the socialists to educate and organize. "He favors the Fabianism of the English Socialists. He would innoculate the present day legislation and administration with socialistic ideas."[7] Among the immediate

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[7]Rochester Herald, March 14, 1901.

demands noted in this speech and not in the account of his Labor Lyceum address, Rauschenbusch said that workers should get one day's rest in seven, a Saturday half-holiday in the summer, and a maximum working day for all state employees and workmen should be established by state contractors. He would "give municipalities the power to acquire lands for the setting up of model tenements and the pulling down of property that is a menace to public health."[8] In criticism of the "dogmatic socialists," he declared that "the attitude of the irreconcilable revolutionary socialists who refuse to accept any reform on the basis of the present social order is unwise and harmful."[9]

Rauschenbusch in this speech made a powerful plea for immediate reforms. Socialists, he asserted, should accept immediate reforms as steps toward a better order, "not just look upon them as bolstering a rotten society."[10] And he held that[11]

> progressive and partial reforms will check the physical, mental, and moral deterioration of the people. Anything that makes the condition of the working classes more tolerable is good in itself. Then, if the unearned increment on land and the value of public franchises can be turned into the public treasury, a substantial part of the wealth of the community will be returned to its rightful owners. This would tend to weaken the power of capitalism.

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[8] Ibid. [9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid. [11] Ibid.

In concluding his Plymouth Church speech Rauschenbusch uttered this prophecy:[12]

> The work of social reform will help to create a social organization that will be able to assume charge of the full weight of the socialist commonwealth. When an evil is seen and a remedy perceived, it should be applied. Many little reforms make one big revolution. Society will gradually grow less capitalistic, more democratic, and more socialistic.

An interesting aspect of these two speeches is that Professor Rauschenbusch managed to exclude his religious views regarding socialism's role. Later the application of Christianity to the real world became intertwined inextricably with the socialist program. The speeches were in keeping with the views of the first Brotherhood organization of 1892, which had decided to oppose both "unsocial Christians and un-Christian socialists."[13]

While Rauschenbusch was in frequent attendance at the Labor Lyceum meetings in the Common Council chamber, he evidently did not speak there very often. What is more significant, he never joined either of the Socialist parties of Rochester. His biographer thinks that atheistic materialism was probably the major reason for Rauschenbusch not joining the Socialist Party.[14]

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[12] Rochester Herald, March 14, 1901.

[13] Dores Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, p. 125.

[14] Ibid., p. 222.

In the speech made by Rauschenbusch before the Labor Lyceum on February 24, 1901, he was critical of the Labor Lyceum and some of its membership. He said that there was "little true freedom of discussion" at the lyceum meetings and blamed this on the dogmatic socialists among them. To improve the forum he suggested that instead of theories practical questions be discussed, such as the interest in the street-car system and the water power of the Genesee River. Rauschenbusch further declared, in criticism of the dogmatic socialists, that "Marx and Engels did not overlook that there were other factors in history besides the economic and material. They merely asserted that those were the chief factors."[15] He urged that the socialists should "rally round their ideals, not class interests," an expression he attributed to Reverend William Brown. Continuing, he said, "the moral ideals of socialism are the soul of socialism, its main strength."[16] Rauschenbusch was also critical of his socialist friends later. In his book Christianizing the Social Order, he makes an interesting statement about them. "A Christian man," he wrote, "...is suspected of atheism, free love, and red-handed violence, and I cannot repudiate that charge against my

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[15]Ibid., pp. 203-216.

[16]Ibid.

party friends as mere slander."[17]

All these objections by Rauschenbusch may have dissuaded him from joining the Socialist Party. However, another version was furnished by William Pidgeon, Jr., a member of the Socialist Party from its inception until 1919, and a friend of Walter Rauschenbusch. Proprietor of a retail shoe store, Pidgeon had been influenced greatly by Rauschenbusch's speaking, writing, and personality, and had become a Christian Socialist. He disavowed materialistic and atheistic socialism. "Rauschenbusch," said Pidgeon, "was a great, good man."[18] Primarily responsible for dissuading Rauschenbusch from joining the Socialist Party in Rochester, according to William Pidgeon, Jr., were he and some of his fellow party members. Rauschenbusch had often expressed guilty feelings to Pidgeon about not being a member of the party in Rochester and he felt he should be. But Pidgeon and his party friends, all friendly to Rauschenbusch, told him that he would be more valuable to the Socialists outside the party than within it. It was felt that Rauschenbusch would have more influence, and would be less subject to attack, among the church-going people as a non-party socialist. They thought that Rauschenbusch would

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[17]Walter Rauschenbusch, Christianizing the Social Order (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1912), p. 108.

[18]Personal interview, William Pidgeon, Jr., April 21, 1952.

have "a rough time among the materialistic-minded Socialists of the party."[19]

In the eyes of many socialists in Rochester men like Rauschenbusch redeemed the church. His personality and learning carried great weight with them. There is one interesting incident in which Rauschenbusch interceded at the Labor Lyceum in behalf of another minister in an effort to extricate him from a barrage laid down by the socialists at the meeting. The pastor of the Second Baptist Church, Reverend Donald MacLaurin, speaking on "The Right Conception of Trade Unionism," was advocating "patience and moral persuasion instead of boycott and violence."[20] He declared that it was wrong for any union "to interfere by force with the liberties of any man in a strike and compel him not to work."[21] He made a plea for the liberty of the non-union man. A storm followed. Richard Kitchelt called him an "anarchist," then made a plea for socialism. Fred Van Auken, another Socialist Party member, said the church was not the friend of the workingman. Reverend MacLaurin was not a Christian, asserted Salvatore Valle, also a Socialist. Barney Ward made a short speech in behalf of Socialism. Frank Sieverman, vitriolic Socialist labor

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Rochester Herald, November 9, 1903.

[21] Ibid.

organizer, contended that the pastor's environment made him think as he did and said that a "scab" had to be made to conform. [illegible] At this moment Professor Rauschenbusch took the floor and told his audience that they had misunderstood the speaker. He declared that "Reverend MacLaurin was speaking for the man whose conscience would not allow him to join a union and who took a striker's place to get money to save his family from starvation."[22] Returned to his position of speaker of the evening, Reverend MacLaurin then made some statements which expressed his disapproval of calling men a "scab," "Jesus never called them names," he concluded.[23]

The Socialists did not leave unnoticed the irony in a situation in which Walter Rauschenbusch, one of the country's most brilliant spokesmen for socialism, was a professor in a theological seminary which was receiving bountiful gifts from the wealthiest man in the country, John D. Rockefeller. However, according to Reverend Dores Sharpe, the professor did not pass through the seminary unscathed, for he was under attack from some of the "Baptist fundamentalists" and some members of the board of trustees [illegible]

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., [illegible], February 17, 1[illegible]

[illegible] Rauschenbusch's concern [illegible] in this paper.

The Reverend Paul Moore Strayer first preached [illegible] in Rochester on May 10, 1903, when he was called to the [illegible] Third Presbyterian Church at the corner of East Avenue and Meigs Street. He had been a pastor of the South Norwalk Congregational Church, Norwalk, Connecticut. Son of a Methodist minister, he was a graduate of Yale Divinity School.[24] As a friend of Walter Rauschenbusch, he collaborated with him in two outstanding kinds of meetings in Rochester, both combining prayer with the discussion of significant religious and social subjects. The first of these was the Brotherhood of the Kingdom meetings, which were held monthly, and, secondly, the People's Sunday Evening Hour, which were begun later in 1908. To the extent that he was one of the leading spirits in the Brotherhood and endorsed the religious-socialistic leanings of the organization, Reverend Strayer was socialistic rather than a socialist. So far as can be determined, he had no socialist party affiliations. [illegible] When the Reverend William Thurston Brown resigned from the Plymouth Congregational Church on July 1, 1902, the Rochester Herald, which had faithfully carried news stories of his sermons from the time that he came to Rochester in 1898, editorialized thus:[25] [illegible]

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[24] Rochester Herald, January 17, 1903. [illegible]

[25] Ibid., May 12, 1902. Many of Rev. Brown's sermons were printed in full by this paper.

Here was no charlatan, straining after effects, seeking notoriety through sensational preaching, but a fearless, eloquent, brilliant student of men and books, proclaiming in the clearest and most forcible language possible the result of his independent investigations in the field of theology.

This eulogy by a Rochester paper was not overdrawn. Reverend Brown ranks as one of Rochester's most notable residents. He passed through the city like a comet, however, and was soon gone.

Before coming to Rochester Reverend Brown held a pastorate at Madison, Connecticut.[26] For a short period after his arrival in Rochester, his sermons at Plymouth Congregational Church were of a strongly liberal nature but primarily dealt with theological subjects. Then he evidently underwent a great change. His sermons took on the air of great inner compulsion and social urgency. From the Plymouth Congregational Church pulpit he thundered like the prophets of old.

He was caught up in the current of "social religion" which was sweeping the country and of which Reverend George Herron was one of the outstanding spokesmen and leaders. Reverend Brown became a friend of Reverend Herron. He was also on friendly terms with Walter Rauschenbusch, who spoke at Plymouth Church occasionally. Like Brown, Herron was a member of the Socialist Party. Sup-

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[26] Charles H. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism (1865-1915) (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1940), p. 200.

plementing these influences upon Brown, it was soon found he was attending and speaking at many meetings at the Common Council chamber sponsored by the Labor Lyceum.

"I did not understand the Socialist philosophy when I came to Rochester," he wrote to Joel Moses later. "The discussions of comrades at the Labor Lyceum opened my eyes as they had not been opened before....."[27]

In the course of his four to five years pastorate in Rochester, Brown underwent an evolution in his religious as well as social and economic thinking. Before 1900 this change was evident. A remarkable sermon titled "A City Without a Church" gives a summary of the pastor Brown's religious views well developed and cogently presented. Contending that future cities will have no need of any churches, he declared:[28]

> The correct aim of religion is to destroy the church by improving the social conditions, and thus fulfil Christ's prophecy..... We allow ourselves to think of institutions which exist as something permanent, something to be perpetuated..... When some Christ comes along as the herald of life, we mistake him for a malefactor and put him to death.....
>
> I do not wonder that most people hold their institutions in such idolatrous regard..... We believe that the church of today is utterly incapable of realizing the ends of religion. Those ends can never be realised except in the whole industrial system. No man has the capacity of being religious in a church. The most a church

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[27] Rochester Herald, December 1, 1902. Letter to Joel Moses sent from Chicago.

[28] Ibid., January 29, 1900.

> can do is to inspire a man with an ideal, but the realization of that ideal is absolutely unthinkable inside the church itself. It is realizable only in the world outside.....

He argued that the church should be used as a means through which to develop so high a social order that the church itself would no longer be needed. Religion, he asserted, was a "phantom" unless it comes in closest contact with material things. "We are beginning to find that education can be had only when the child or man is brought in contact with material things."[29] Envisioning the future, Reverend Brown prophecied:[30]

> Perhaps we have thought that the tendency of life is to abolish all things sacred and make everything secular. We are mistaken. The real movement today is in the opposite direction..... We shall make all things sacred, and we shall do that by realizing in the whole system of society and industry those ideals that we have tried in vain to embody in a church. The civilization to be will be a churchless civilization, because it will be a civilization in which all that the church, in its best thought, has sought after, will be brought into the very fiber of the social order, and in that better system religion and life, nay, work and worship, will become one.

The next month the pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church was moved to proclaim to his congregation that the "old ideals are dead..... New ones must replace them. We must have a gospel of growth, no idolatry."[31]

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Rochester Herald, February 12, 1900.

Several months later, in a blast against prayer and giving vent to a humanistic and naturalistic philosophy, he followed with the statement that "the old idea of supplication to a Personal Deity was unavailing--by the study of Nature's forces and learning the mastery of nature man may answer prayer himself."[32] The Rochester Herald's publication of this statement brought forth editorial criticism from the Rochester Post-Express. Undaunted Reverend Brown sallied into the teeth of this criticism with a more sweeping charge. "The laws of nature are the laws of God. The man who flies in the face of science is the opponent of truth and therefore of religion: for what is religion if it is not truth?"[33] To add to the fire of this debate the pastor added: "Miraculous interposition is the outcome of ignorance and superstition."[34]

This minister's religious views became intertwined with his views on economics. His criticism of contemporary industry, his gospel for labor, and his hopes for humanity in the labor movement were eloquently proclaimed from his Sunday pulpit. Stating that "modern industry...has no soul, no morals, no ethics," he told

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[32]Ibid., June 25, 1900.

[33]Ibid., June 30, 1900.

[34]Ibid.

one Sunday of his seeing "Small Girls Wanted" signs in the windows of some Rochester business places. Said this orator, "It must be tamed, domesticated, socialized, ... this beast of prey."[35] In one of his sermon-lectures to his parishioners on William Lloyd Garrison, the young and fiery pastor of Plymouth Church expressed his emotions toward the contemporary economic system. "I have said tonight that the system of wage slavery is an intolerable iniquity. And that is exactly what I mean. I mean to say that no words are strong enough to express the hideous and horrible iniquity of this system. I believe it to be far more demoralizing and degrading both to owners' and owned than negro slavery was. It is more subtle."[36] On still another occasion, in a sermon on "Opportunity and Duty of the Working Classes," Brown made it clear that "the hope of humanity," as he expressed it, "lies in the working classes. ... Evolution of cooperation must solve the problem of industrial slavery."[37]

After President McKinley was assassinated, Plymouth Church's pastor examined the social and political conditions surrounding this event and blamed the social conditions produced by industry of the day for considering life as non-sacred. Justice, he asserted, would

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[35]Rochester Herald, April 21, 1902.

[36]Ibid., April 22, 1901.

[37]Ibid., May 4, 1902.

eradicate violence of this sort.

"What is Right?" was the subject of a sermon by Reverend Brown in which he joined the questions of war and the economic system. He said:[38]

> So long as war is tolerated, every man is in some measure a soldier. So long as slavery is tolerated, some men will be slaves. So long as the present system of commercialism exists, man's higher evolution is delayed..... The Boer War is a perfectly true and fair picture of the whole industrial and commercial world today. The question of justice is a pretense everywhere in the face of brute force..... I am contending for a system under which absolute equality shall be assured to all.....

An interesting idealization of the gospel for labor was made by Reverend Brown in a sermon in which he accused the industrial system of making laboring men mere cogs in the machine. "Labor is a message of joy to man," he declared. "The whole fabric of industry.....must be changed in such a way that it will be not only a joy but a religion, a service of love and a realization of fellowship. It can be that only as the instruments of labor belong to all and the products of labor are distributed according to each man's need."[39]

A deliberate attempt was made by Reverend Brown to educate his own flock in social problems and social thinking. In 1901 he conducted a series of sermon-lectures on John Ruskin, William Morris, Karl Marx,

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[38] Ibid., April 22, 1900.

[39] Rochester Herald, February 17, 1902.

direct result of this act was the expulsion of Reverend Herron from the ministry by the Congregational Church and the loss of his professorship at Grinnell College, Iowa.[40] Rochester criticism was directed also at Reverend Brown for his role in this drama.

Besides his preaching in the pulpit, Reverend Brown was the author of a number of religious-socialist pamphlets: The True Meaning of Christianity, The Real Religion of Today, After Capitalism What?, How Capitalism Has Hypnotized Society, and The Relation of Religion to Social Ethics.[41] He also contributed articles to the Social Age and Here and Now.

The triumvirate, Reverend Crapsey, Professor Rauschenbusch, and Reverend Brown, all of Rochester, had much in common. Brown was the stormiest of the three; Crapsey was almost as colorful and dramatic; Rauschenbusch was the most erudite and profound. When, for example, in December of 1900, the Rochester Herald launched a crusade against gambling and crime, Reverend Crapsey of St. Andrew's Church blithely announced that he "would not antagonize the saloon, that he would befriend the vicious."[42] He pointed out that Christ sat down with the Publicans

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[40] Charles H. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, p. 200.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Rochester Herald, December 10, 1900.

and sinners. This was Christ's method, he asserted. A week later Reverend Brown joined with Reverend Crapsey when, in his sermon on "The Crusade Against Vice," Reverend Brown said: "The whole profit system is one great debauchery, one vast prostitution. It is the utter violation and profanation of human nature. It is the very essence of prostitution."[43] He called the Anti-Saloon League and the Prohibition Union of Christian Men "mistaken and wasteful," "misdirected." This story, appearing in the Rochester Herald was headlined:

Doctor Crapsey and Brown Agree On Vice

Reverend Brown became a member of the Socialist Party and ran for the office of lieutenant-governor in the 1902 election. He campaigned vigorously, speaking frequently in Rochester. He got 1,334 votes in the city, most from the Socialists' strongest ward, the seventeenth ward.

The liberalism of Reverend Brown led to an unsuccessful attempt as early as 1899 in ousting him from his pulpit by an opposition faction in his church. Later, in 1901, the creed of the church was discarded. No doctrinal test was required for membership. "It is our aim to make it a municipal church," said the president of the board of trustees, J. Warrant Castleman,".....a church

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[43] Ibid., December 17, 1900.

in name, but in scope a grand educational society or club, and to advocate and aid in the betterment of all people in this life and bring about better social conditions."[44] Reverend Brown was to teach higher criticism of the Bible. The board of trustees of the church went further to implement "social religion," however, by permitting a club to have billiard games, card games, bowling alley, and dances where the church services were held, and to erect a stage for theatrical performances. To make effective this program, described as an experiment at first, a club known as "The Pilgrims" was organized. No liquor or gambling was permitted. In a sermon delivered on December 29, 1901, Reverend Brown ably explained the new departure of the church:[45]

> The church intended to cultivate all of man's nature.... Why a people's church? The same reason we should have a people's government. A people's church must have no exclusiveness, be all-embracing, have no creeds or theology. Men must unite for common ends. The interests of religion must be the interests of life..... The building belongs to the community, especially the over-worked and under-paid men and women.... This building stands for human life.... For whatever service it can render that means brotherhood or justice, this building is at the disposal of all people.

Unexpectly, however, on May 11, 1902, Reverend William T. Brown announced in his pulpit his resignation effective July 1. Plans for remodeling the church had

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[44] Rochester Herald, October 9, 1901.

[45] Ibid., December 30, 1901.

been given up. The Pilgrims were only partly successful. The church attendance, according to Reverend Brown, had doubled since his ministry began and the church members were still loyal to him. However, he noted that the membership was only one-twentieth as wealthy as under the previous minister, Myron Adams, and he said that his ministry was forcing Plymouth Church members to "make financial sacrifices to support his pulpit." He was unwilling that they should suffer financially for anything he taught or did. The flight of wealth from his church thus undermined his religious and social radicalism. Parts of his resignation speech are noteworthy:[46]

> I cannot agree to adjust my teaching to any creed, and for the sake of my own peace of mind and manhood I cannot consent to adjust my life to immoral social conventions. Religious creeds and social conventions stultify and strangle manhood. It is no better to live a lie than it is to teach one.....

He declared that he had chosen the Christian ministry out of conviction that the end of human life was the establishment of the kingdom of heaven or happiness on earth and the church the most suitable agency for that purpose.

> ..... I assumed that an institution having Jesus as its head could have no other aim..... I found that the church as an institution nowhere contemplates any such program. It does not possess in its equipment, whether material or intellectual, any of the agencies that can realize

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[46] Ibid., May 12, 1902.

such a result. I heard much talk of the 'brotherhood of man' and the 'fatherhood of God' but I saw that these phrases meant nothing and were taken to mean nothing in men's social and industrial relations. At first....I was inclined to blame individuals for these social conditions which make all our talk of 'brotherhood' and 'fatherhood' a species of hypocrisy. I am convinced that men of all classes are as good as their environment will permit them to be. And I understand that men's social and industrial relations are determined by forces over which religion or the church has no more influence than they have over the motions of the planets.... The whole philosophy of religions and so-called philanthropic activity is mistaken, and the church and charitable institutions are simply manifestations of misdirected energy.

My hope of moral progress lies in.....enlightenment and such a sense of personal and class interests as will make the people the masters of their own destiny.

I have long ceased to believe that any outside being or force is going to solve our problems and bring us emancipation from all kinds of slavery. The forces which are to solve our problems and bring our emancipation.....are within us and about ourselves..... I look forward with hope to the advent of industrial democracy as giving promise of a larger freedom and a better life for all.

My most imperative reason for resigning relates to the question of personal morality. No man can think worthily who does not square his deeds with his words. We can know only in proportion as we do. A man's life is his creed, and if his personal activity does not reflect the ethics of his teaching or his convictions he is bound soon or late to crystallize into a hypocrite. In our modern world conformity has taken the place of morality. We are not free souls. We are only monotonous reflections of customs based on economic slavery.....

My conscience requires me to assert my freedom, to express myself..... I want justice and liberty..... You who constitute Plymouth Church .....represent not an institution, but a cause...

On the day after Reverend Brown's resignation speech the Rochester Herald printed a picture of the dark-

haired, tousled, and handsome minister. He delivered his farewell sermon on June 22, 1902, before a large crowd. Declaring that he could no longer use the machinery of the church, saying that he had to find another way, he closed with the words: "I cannot better express what has been my own philosophy of life or better give you my benediction at the end of this chapter of our life together than in those old words of Shakespeare, 'To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou can'st not then be false to any man.'"

In December of this year of 1902 he lectured all the way to the west coast and in British Columbia on labor and socialism. In a letter to Joel Moses, a Socialist friend, he revealed the depths of his conversion to socialism. "I have a feeling of profound pity," he wrote, "for men and women who are taking no part in the noblest movement that ever summoned the souls of men.... The Socialist vote in the last election was the only thing worth recording. It is the one great gleam of hope in the world." Commenting upon his severance with the church, he added: "I am glad to be out of the church, as an institution. It has no gospel for the world, none whatever, nor can it have. Good tidings for the world are being preached by Socialists as by no others."[47]

The epilogue regarding the disposition of Ply-

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[47] Rochester Herald, December 1, 1902.

mouth Church came in December of 1902, when the church was turned over to the New York State Congregational Home Missionary Society. The president of this organization, Reverend Frank Fitch, in an interview on December 21, 1902, said: "The fault in the past has been that the affairs of the church have been loosely managed."[48] He then told a reporter that the bowling alleys, billiard tables, and dancing would be abolished. "This church will be run as a house of worship, not as a playground," affirmed Reverend Fitch.[49]

Approximately a year after the disposition of the church in December of 1902, the Rochester Herald stated that William T. Brown had applied in Boston, Massachusetts, "for admission into the Unitarian Church and will soon be received into full communion in that denomination." Added the respectful Rochester Herald: "He was one of the ablest men in this city."[50]

The Reverend Brown had evidently found an emotional and intellectual home in the Unitarian Church in 1903, for in 1915 he attended a Unitarian Church conference in Chicago.[51] Theologically speaking, Unitarianism and its minimum emphasis upon doctrine afforded Reverend

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[48] Ibid., December 22, 1902. [49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., November 30, 1903

[51] Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

Brown a haven. More than this, however, it is probable that he soon realized that his own maximum effectiveness could be exerted for the things which he sought in the midst of the church groups and from the pulpit. As an independent lecturer wandering about the country, he found much to be desired, according to the letter which he wrote to Joel Moses shortly after his resignation from Plymouth Church.

The revolt of Reverend Brown against the church as an institution was shortlived. That he left a lasting impression upon Plymouth Church members, however, is attested to by those who had attended sessions there. What is especially significant is that he was able to carry along with him eminently respectable and conservative individuals such as the future president of the Rochester Board of Education, J. Warrant Castleman.

The liaison between Reverend Algernon Crapsey and Walter Rauschenbusch does not seem to have been as close as that between the Reverend William T. Brown and Walter Rauschenbusch. For one reason or another at no time does it appear that Reverend Crapsey and Reverend Brown, though in many ways kindred spirits, ever appear together or jointly carry on any ventures. Both spoke frequently at the Labor Lyceum meetings in the Common Council chamber, however, and both felt the same way about "vice crusading."

Reverend Crapsey aligned himself early with the "social gospelers" and preached frequently and ably in behalf of the church taking an increased role in the solution of everyday social problems. As early as 1897 he had published a book titled A Voice in the Wilderness, which was a plea for restoration of primitive Christianity and was addressed to the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. One of his strongest sermons on "Social Equality", mentioned as the four factors which he considered most important in bringing about social equality (1) political power (2) machinery (3) education and (4) social religion. "The church is no longer looked upon as an institution to save man from damnation in another world, but to save them from damnation in this world,"[52] he said on this occasion. Pursuing a line of thought much akin to Reverend Brown's several months after Reverend Brown had resigned, Reverend Crapsey spoke at Plymouth Church on the "Unorganized Forces of Religion."[53] He told his audience that present theological systems must go as they are based on suppositions and not on facts. For both Protestants and Catholics, he said, the Church God was a Roman Emperor. He accused the church of administering only to the respectable and the righteous, not to the lower classes and disreputable.

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[52] Rochester Herald, March 18, 1901.

[53] Ibid., November 24, 1902.

When he spoke at the Labor Lyceum sessions, however, he dealt with such topics as the evolution of social progress, child labor, and labor and socialism. He consorted a great deal with men in the labor movement and with Socialists, joined in many of their activities, but until 1912 shied away from any formal commitment with the Socialists. He was in the stream of socialistic ministers who, while unable to adopt Marxian principles in toto, combined the principal ideas of socialism with Christianity into that amalgam which one can only label as Christian Socialism.

CHAPTER IV

ROCHESTER SOCIALISM--1905 TO 1912

The Rising Socialist Tide

After the election of 1904, in Rochester and the rest of the country there was no mistaking a growing Socialist movement. There was a mounting membership in the Socialist Party, and the activities of the party became more pervasive and intensified. The churches and the schools felt this growing sentiment. The Socialist literature was expanded. The Industrial Workers of the World, (at the extreme left in the socialist movement) came into the field as a new-born organization. The Socialist Party took an interest and action on a wide front of social problems. The election campaigns became more intense and dramatic. Controversies involving socialists became more numerous and more publicized.

Rochester had a part in this general socialistic development. There was a battle involving the social centers which were organized in the Rochester public schools. Socialists established an ably written and edited, though shortlived, newspaper. There was the expulsion of the Labor Lyceum from the Common Council chamber. The climactic event regarding the socialists

in this period came when a University of Rochester professor was forced to resign under pressure for controversial public statements. The subsequent construction of the Labor Lyceum building at 580 St. Paul Street was one of the results of these episodes. These were only some of the evidences of the growth of the socialist movement in Rochester and its resulting impact upon the community.

The Socialist Party as early as 1907, perhaps earlier, considered itself strong enough to open a full-time centralized office and hall at 40 State Street. In the year 1911 the headquarters were moved to the second floor of Shoemaker's Hall, located at the corner of Elm and Main Streets.[1] In 1918, however, headquarters were moved again to 27 Church Street, where the party had the use of two floors, before finally moving to 680 St. Paul Street in January of 1913. By 1907, too, the Rochester Socialists had formed a Women's Branch and a Men's Branch of the party. A little later occurred the differentiation of the party into the German, Italian, Polish, and Jewish branches in Rochester, though the central organization of the party was maintained intact.

When in 1911 William Hilsdorf, Jr. joined the Socialist Party (his father, William Hilsdorf, Sr., a blacksmith, was a member before him), the Rochester local was near its peak strength. As financial secretary of

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[1]The present location of Grant's Department Store.

the local from 1914 to 1917, he stated that the party reached a membership of nine hundred dues-paying members in Rochester, remaining at that strength with little variation for the period from 1911 to 1917.[2] In contrast with the Socialist Party, the Socialist Labor Party was undergoing a steady decline in membership and in activity in Rochester. Nationally, the Socialist Party jumped from a membership of 20,763 in 1904 to 118,045 in 1912.[3]

Socialism penetrated the Rochester schools. Warren Atkinson taught electricity in the Edison Technical High School from 1912 to 1945, and another teacher at East High School, Ellis S. Smith, is mentioned (though not verified) as a member of the Socialist Party. At the University of Rochester Professor Kendrick Shedd became a member of the Socialist Party in 1906, and according to him, George M. Forbes, Professor of philosophy and pedagogy (and in 1909 President of the Board of Education of Rochester), and Herman LeRoy Fairchild, Professor of geology, were also socialists, though not as outspoken as he. Professor Shedd was not sure of their affiliation with the party, however.[4] Professor Edward J. Ward, for-

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[2]Personal interview, William Hilsdorf, Jr., June 8, 1952. He was a lithographer during the 1911-1917 period. At present he is president of the Rochester local of the Lithographer's Union (CIO).

[3]Harry W. Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, p. 588.

[4]Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

merly of Madison University, a devotee of the social center idea, later head of the Rochester playgrounds and head of the first social centers in Rochester, was also a socialist. In a speech quoted in the Rochester Socialist for January 24, 1908, which Professor Edward J. Ward delivered at the Columbian Knights Hall in Buffalo on January 20, 1908, he called for "joining the movement (Socialist Party) for the emancipation of the exploited no matter what society and so-called public opinion may say." This paper stated that he was a Secretary-General of the "growing Christian Fellowship" of which the Christian Socialist of Chicago was the organ.[5]

In 1906 Harry W. Laidler and Upton Sinclair were organizing the Intercollegiate Socialist Society of which Jack London, the novelist, became the first president. This organization is the precursor of the present League for Industrial Democracy. Whether or not the socialist professors or students in Rochester were members of this organization is not conclusively known. However, a Socialist Study Club at the University of Rochester was in the news when Professor Kendrick Shedd was being attacked by the Rochester newspapers in November of 1911. Conrad R. Koegler, president of the Socialist Study Club and captain of the University of Rochester

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[5]Rochester Socialist, January 17, 1908.

football team, came to the defense of Professor Shedd at this time.[6] Whether or not this club was affiliated with the Intercollegiate Socialist Society is not known. However, the very existence of the club indicates some socialist sentiment on the University of Rochester campus at this time. Morris Hillquit, moreover, mentions in one of his books that "Socialist study chapters connected with the Intercollegiate Socialist Society have been organized in about fifty universities and colleges."[7]

Spearheaded by Professor Rauschenbusch and Dr. Harry Ward socialistic criticism of contemporary society affected the theological seminaries. It is not demonstrable how many converts Professor Walter Rauschenbusch made to socialism at the Rochester Theological Seminary. When in 1907 his powerful critique of contemporary society was published, "Christianity and the Social Crisis, it had a wide influence, and it made him a national figure. Reverend Herbert A. Lotes, a student at the Rochester Theological Seminary in 1908, and in 1911 a minister of the North Baptist Church, became a member of the Socialist Party.[8]

The Christian Socialist Fellowship was organized

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[6]Rochester Evening Times, November 22, 1911.

[7]Morris Hillquit, Socialism Summed Up, p. 107.

[8]Personal interview, William Pidgeon, Jr., April 21, 1952.

in 1906, growing out of a prior organization known as the Social Crusade. According to its statement of purpose it was organized "to permeate churches, denominations, and other religious institutions with the social message of Jesus, to show that Socialism is the necessary economic expression of the Christian life, to end the class struggle by establishing industrial democracy, and to hasten the reign of justice and brotherhood on earth."[9] This organization developed out of discussions in The Christian Socialist, a newspaper begun in 1903 by a Webster City, Iowa, minister. It is quite likely that some of the Socialist ministers of Rochester and theology students of the Rochester Theological Seminary were enlisted as members in this national organization. Said Joseph Wanhope, a New York City Socialist, speaking at a Labor Lyceum meeting in October of 1905: "It is the irony of fate that the school which is supported by the richest man on earth is a nest of so-called social heresy and revolution against the ruling classes. The trend in the universities is for Socialism."[10] When Professor Rauschenbusch's first book, selling an estimated 50,000 copies, was proclaiming that "Socialism is by far and

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[9]Charles H. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel, pp. 236-237.

[10]Rochester Herald, October 2, 1905.

[11]Dores Sharp, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 219-220.

away the most powerful force for justice, democracy, and organized fraternity in the modern world,"[11] it left some impression on the Christians in Rochester and in America.

Important in Rochester at this time, also, in producing that moral and intellectual climate which often went into the making of a Christian or secular socialist were the Brotherhood meetings of Crapsey held at the Lyceum Theatre and the People's Sunday Evening Hour organized November 1, 1908 with Paul Moore Strayer, Rauschenbusch, and Henry H. Stebbins as ministers. The People's Sunday Evening Hour first held meetings at the National Theatre, with Strayer being the chairman and guiding spirit. The Brotherhood organized by Reverend Crapsey began to hold meetings on October 7, 1907, and stipulated no creed or church affiliation. His lecture-sermons dealt with the modern outlook on religion and the Bible. He spoke on such topics as "Evolution of God" and "The God of the City," and offered "modern" biblical criticism to his large audiences. These Brotherhood meetings continued to 1915, when Doctor Crapsey took a position as state parole officer at the reformatory at Industry, New York. The People's Sunday Evening Hour, however, continued to function until 1916. Social problems and social religion were the prayerful concern of these well-conducted and popular Sunday meetings

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[11] Dores Sharp, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 219-220.

aimed at all workmen on a non-sectarian basis.

The Crapsey Heresy Case

It was the ill-fortune, however, of one of Rochester's most dramatic social gospel ministers, Reverend Algernon Crapsey, to run afoul of his own Episcopalian Church governing body on doctrine and be compelled to resign from the ministry. Religious liberalism in the United States had made increasingly rare such events as took place in the heresy trial of Reverend Algernon Crapsey. He himself appreciated this when, in writing his autobiography in 1924, he titled it "The Last of the Heretics."

Reverend Crapsey was tried before an Episcopalian court and found guilty of "canonical offences," that is, it was decided that he had broken his ordination promises regarding the Old and New Testament being the word of God and containing all things necessary to salvation. They claimed he had violated both the Nicene Creed and Apostle's Creed. Specifically, on May 9, 1906, he was found guilty by a diocesan court in Batavia, New York, for calling the beliefs of the church regarding resurrection and the virgin birth legends instead of facts. On the basis of a sermon delivered on December 31, 1905, and his book, Religion and Politics, published in 1905, he had, it was determined, impugned the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the trinity. He had allegedly im-

pugned and expressed disbelief in the Holy Ghost, His virgin birth, and His resurrection. These were the counts on which his guilt rested. The case was appealed from the diocesan court of four clergymen and three laymen, and the appeals court upheld the verdict on November 16, 1906. Rather than being dismissed or suspended, and refusing to recant, Reverend Crapsey sent his letter of resignation on November 26, 1906, to Bishop David Walker, bishop of western New York. Thus Reverend Crapsey was forced from the church's Rochester social gospel team. This decision did not fundamentally deter Reverend Crapsey from later participation in important social ventures in Rochester. If anything it did influence him to veer farther and farther to the left in his political thinking, for he devoted more and more time to the labor movement and to interests and activities of the socialists of Rochester. The trial had gained national recognition. For twenty-eight years Reverend Crapsey had been rector of St. Andrews Episcopal Church. From a mission group of ten families he had built up a congregation of several hundred. Like the Reverend William T. Brown before him, he was compelled to shift his direction and take a detour, though by no means to completely lose sight of his ultimate objectives. No longer embraced by the institution of the church, he still represented its socially conscious spirit. He lived to the age of eighty,

dying on the last day of the year 1927.

Enter The Wobblies

Not to be overlooked in the period from 1905 to 1918 is the most dynamic of the radical groups in the country, the Industrial Workers of the World (the I. W. W. or the "Wobblies"). Little can be resurrected of their activity or membership in Rochester, New York. However, there is no doubt that they did exist there and were occasionally associated with Rochester socialists in common action.

Briefly, the Industrial Workers of the World was organized in Chicago on June 27, 1905, by such radical leaders as William Haywood, Eugene Debs, Daniel De Leon, William Trautmann, "Mother" Jones, Thomas J. Hagerty, and Charles Moyer. It developed out of the bitter strike at Cripple Creek, Idaho, in which the militia was called out. Like the Knights of Labor before it, it called into its ranks all the skilled and unskilled workers into one great organization of individual workers and industrial unions. Affiliated with no political party, based on the class struggle, it appealed especially to the mass of unorganized, unskilled workers. It was an expression of militant labor unionism and was politically revolutionary. Its weapons were the strike, boycotts, sabotage, and general strike. A federated council of trade unions was to bring about self-government by the

workers organized by industries. In 1908 it split into Detroit and Chicago factions (the former being the small De Leonite group of the I. W. W.). The western members succeeded in repudiating the use of political weapons as a basis of their organization, and Debs and others left the Industrial Workers of the World ranks to the absolute direct actionists. The Wobblies waged industrial battles and "free speech" fights with the Pennsylvania state police at McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, in 1909, in Spokane, Washington, in 1909, and in San Diego in 1912. Warfare continued in the Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike in 1912. A pitched battle occurred between Wobblies and deputies and vigilantes in Everett, Washington, in 1916. In actions such as these the epitome of the American radical became represented in the Wobblies. They had spirit, solidarity, courage, and humor and used all these in their industrial strife. The Industrial Workers of the World was "born in conflict," and its membership was young and chiefly from the West, though the East contributed many members from their low-paid textile mills. As one historian of the Industrial Workers of the World has expressed it: "The harsh and mutinous protest of our I. W. W. is to be judged solely in its relation to a vastly larger democratic rising against the absolutism and masked economic privilege of our own day."[12]

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[12] John Graham Brooks, American Syndicalism: The I.W.W. (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1913), p. 46.

A local of the Industrial Workers of the World was organized in Rochester among the textile workers of the city. Known as Local Number 191, it was affiliated with the Chicago branch of the Industrial Workers of the World after the split occurred in the organization in 1908.[13] Only one member of the national Industrial Workers of the World from Rochester in its early period, though not a member of the Rochester local, is known. He is Julius Hoesterey, Jr., son of one of Rochester's earliest Socialist Party members.[14] Inquiries have revealed no further information regarding this Rochester local of the Industrial Workers of the World. The probability is that the local did not exist until some time around 1912, when the Industrial Workers of the World reached its peak membership and when its fame (or notoriety) reached its maximum.

The Socialist Press

The growing national press of the Socialist Party served as an impetus to the Rochester local to undertake greater efforts in this field. Up to the latter part of

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[13] Paul Frederick Brissenden, The I.W.W.: A Study of American Syndicalism (Columbia University Press, 1919), Appendix V.

[14] Personal interview, Julius Hoesterey, Jr., March 10, 1952. Hoesterey, at present a lithographer, stated that he knew nothing about a Rochester local of the I.W.W., though he said that he had carried an I.W.W. card in his youth.

1907 there appears to have been no organ of the Rochester local published. They had issued pamphlets, leaflets, sponsored lectures, and in campaigns had done considerable soap-box oratorical work on street corners. For the most part, however, they were dependent upon the popular and influential Appeal to Reason, which had started in 1892 in Girard, Kansas, the International Socialist Review, which had been published in Chicago since 1900, the Chicago Daily Socialist established in 1906, the New York Daily Call launched in 1908, and the Jewish Daily Forward, which closely challenged the near half-million circulation of the Appeal to Reason by 1911. For women The Socialist Woman carried the Socialist gospel from Chicago. The Christian Socialist, organ of the Christian Socialist Fellowship, appealed to members with a religious bent. There were many Socialist foreign language newspapers and periodicals being published in increasing numbers after 1904. Debs, Charles Edward Russell, Upton Sinclair, Allen Benson, and other competent and articulate writers were lending a hand in this literary campaign.

In Rochester the publisher of the Rochester Herald, John David, gave sympathetic news coverage to Rochester's socialist activity in this period which has evidently not been matched since by any city newspaper. The publisher, however, was a Democrat. The total circu-

lation of the Herald as of October 31, 1907 was 21,189.[15] The recognition gained by the Socialists in the columns of this paper, which was not negative and damaging in its policy in treating of Socialist news, greatly aided the Socialists in gaining social acceptance among greater numbers in Rochester. Intelligent social criticism by intelligent Socialists was often treated as such by the Rochester Herald, though the Socialists never felt that their activities or views were adequately covered by this or any other newspaper in the city.

Rochester Socialists, however, desired a news organ which would express solely their own viewpoint. Thus, finally, a committee was set up by the Rochester local of the Socialist Party in 1907 to publish the Rochester Socialist. This four-page weekly newspaper was published from December 14, 1907, to March 27, 1908, inclusive. They published fourteen issues in all. The paper was ably written and edited, under the direction of this committee, with William J. Kirby[16] as business manager and Norman M. Thomas as circulation manager. It was published from the party's office at 40 State Street and sold for one cent per copy and fifty cents per year.

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[15] Rochester Herald, October 31, 1907.

[16] William Kirby was connected with the Rochester Herald prior to or following this as a reporter. Later, and until this year, he was a member of the editorial staff of the Democrat and Chronicle.

As the paper in its first issue announced, it was necessary to carry advertising as subscriptions would not cover the costs. Notable in this connection, however, was the fact that only Socialists advertised in the paper, among them being John Zaches,[17] merchant tailor, Herbert E. Steiner, tinsmith, William Erbacker, oil and gas dealer, William Pidgeon and son, shoe dealers then at 19 Front Street, and Richard Gardner, suits and overcoats dealer on State Street. The Brewery Workers' Union also contributed advertising.

To the left of the banner title of the paper was a boxed slogan, "Labor is the Sole Creator of Wealth," and to the right of the title of the paper ran the boxed slogan, "Wealth Should Belong to Those Who Create It." Carried in every issue was the party platform for 1908, a two-column women's section, special feature articles, editorials, announcements of meetings and party activities, articles aimed at explaining the aims and objectives of Socialism, and what it was and was not. An American Federation of Labor list of employers unfair to labor was also printed in each issue. There were reprints of articles from national Socialist papers. Individual letters were contributed, news items added commentary, a book department listed much current and important past

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[17] John Zaches is now a patriarchal vice-president of the Rochester C. I. O. Council.

literature, mostly dealing with Socialism, and a question and answer column was a feature. Some proletarian poetry and short stories were included occasionally under such titles as "The Competitive Hell," [illegible] The aims of the paper were expressed in the first issue:[18]

> ...to advocate the principles of International Socialism and advance the interests of the workers of Rochester, treating local events from the Socialist viewpoint..... Support the factory laws, aid unionism, promote equal political rights for women..... In spite of the weapon of silence used by the press to retard the advance of Socialism,..... Socialism has grown, and in this city it has grown to such stature that it feels capable of supporting a sheet of its own.

Much information regarding the Socialist Party of Rochester at this time - its spirit, personalities, propaganda and education, and its resources - are obtainable from the Rochester Socialist even though its life was short. While publishing the Rochester Socialist, the Socialist Party maintained reading rooms open to the public at its headquarters at 40 State Street. Daily papers and Socialist literature were available. The Women's Branch of the party was functioning well, holding separate meetings at 40 State Street and elsewhere and having its own officers. The Socialists were also

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[18] Rochester Socialist, December 14, 1907. Microfilmed copies of this paper are now available at the Rochester Public Library, Local History Division. Original copies are held by the State Historical Society of Madison, Wisconsin.

organized by wards, and language groups may have begun at this time. A Polish Socialist Association and a Russian Jewish organization of Socialists, known as The Bund, along with members of the Socialist Party and Socialist Labor Party, are reported as meeting together in 1907.[19] Italian Socialists are noted as meeting at Germania Hall on January 19, 1908. Delegates were being sent to state conventions of the party. Herbert Steiner was financial secretary of the local in 1908. There is mention made of a Socialist lawyer, Sigmund G. Gelbart, with a law office at 612 Prudential Building.[20] No other mention of him is made elsewhere. Entertainments and socials were held by the party at National Hall, 12 Lowell Street, Hillburger's Hall, corner of Genesee and Latour Streets, Wisner's Hall, corner of State and Church Streets, Germania Hall on North Clinton Avenue, and other places. An annual dance (the seventh, on February 3, 1908) was sponsored by Local Rochester at Wisner's Hall. Party speakers were appearing at the Labor Lyceum in the Common Council chamber. All these events were promoted by the Rochester Socialist.

The calibre of the propaganda and education of the Rochester Socialist was relatively high as compared

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[19] Rochester Socialist, December 28, 1907.

[20] Ibid., February 28, 1908.

with polemical writing usually found of this sort. For purposes of education articles appeared giving definitions of Socialism from dictionaries, encyclopaedias, Ruskin, Spencer, Carlyle, Professor Ely, J. S. Mill, ministers, and others. Biographical articles appeared on such persons as Karl Marx. Other articles dealt with differentiation between Socialism and the anarchist opposition. Another article dealt with the Christian Socialist Fellowship, giving it the slogan, "The Golden Rule Instead of the Rule of Gold."

In the presentation of its case for Socialism, however, the Rochester Socialist did an excellent piece of work. In one thoughtful editorial on "Changing Human Nature," one writer signing himself "Argus" argues:[21]

> .....as conditions change, human action changes, but human nature remains the same..... Under the present system of private ownership the welfare and happiness, aye, the very lives of nations as well as individuals depends on their ability to accumulate wealth; hence the struggle. So long as there are abundant crops abundant fuel, abundant material for clothing and shelter and abundant human energy to properly prepare and distribute these things, there ought not, and under a proper system there would not be either want nor the fear of want, and it would then be possible for the good and noble side of human nature to unfold and develop into a beauty and nobility heretofore unknown. But to leave conditions as they are and simply keep on harping about the inherent badness of human nature is not only a waste of time, it is a slander on humanity, an insult to human intelligence.

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[21] Rochester Socialist, March 13, 1908.

The Rochester Socialist reprinted some highly literate articles from the Buffalo Herald, a Socialist newspaper, by Max Winkler, a Socialist. One rather remarkable story of his titled "The Bees and Wes--Is Co operation Possible?" posed these propositions: "In proportion as society organizes itself and rises in the scale so does a shrinkage enter the private life of each one of its members..... Where there is progress, it is the result of a more and more complete sacrifice of the individual to the general interest."[22]

To make Socialism believable to Christians, one article headed The Socialism of Christ was featured. Notices appeared of meetings held by liberal ministers speaking on closely related topics, e.g., Reverend C. A. Barbour speaking at the Labor Lyceum on February 2, 1908, on "The Trend of Some Modern Social Conditions." A week later, it was noted, Reverend Byron Curtis was speaking at the Labor Lyceum on "Industrial Democracy." It congratulated Doctor Algernon S. Crapsey for having the courage to speak before a Parent Teachers Association meeting at Number 15 School on "Some Facts Relating to Human Birth," saying further that "it ought to be taken out of the hands of the teachings of the street."[23]

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[22] Ibid., March 27, 1908.

[23] Rochester Socialist, February 28, 1908.

"Socialism--the Logical Next Step in Human Advancement" was the lead story in one issue of the Rochester Socialist.[24] It gave the Marxian view of the evolution of the modern economy from barbarism through slavery through feudalism through capitalism. It concluded.

> It is the mission of Socialism to bring order out of chaos, cooperation out of conflict, justice out of injustice, and to establish that relation between man and his environment which nature has been trying to establish since the very beginning of society, and toward which man in his ignorance has persistently set his face.

"A hundred years ago," the Rochester Socialist refrain runs in many issues, "Socialism was impossible. Now capitalism is impossible." Confidently and with a new spirit the Socialists wrote a self-characterization in the Rochester Socialist of the movement in which they were engaged:[25]

> The Socialists are no longer a band of hunted outcasts. They are gay, defiant, jaunty. They have numbers, organization, bases of supplies. You may call them fanatics, but they are as cool and intelligent in their fanaticism as the little brown heathens that stormed Port Arthur and put a Russian navy into limbo. . . . They have all the sanctions of great personality behind them. The greatest living scientist, Wallace, the man who worked out the theory of evolution contemporaneously with Darwin, is a Socialist. Nearly every economist of note acknowledges the accuracy of its scientific forecast. The most prominent literary men, poets, and philosophers are among

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[24] Ibid., March 20, 1908.

[25] Ibid., February 28, 1908.

its disciples and apostles. Socialism is growing. Mankind has at length turned to the task of establishing a just social order.

In this kind of spirit the Rochester Socialists could write short stories and poetry in their paper, a sample of which ran as follows:[26]

> The merchant calls it profit, and he
> Winks the other eye;
> The banker calls it interest, and he
> Heaves a happy sigh;
> The landlord calls it rent, and he
> Tucks it in his bag;
> But the unpretentious burglar simply
> Calls it swag.

Rochester Socialists on Social Problems

It was on social problems plaguing Rochester that the Socialists placed great emphasis, however. Writing on "Our Poisoned Food Supply," the Rochester Socialist discussed Upton Sinclair's expose in The Jungle and gave the findings of Doctor Wiley of the Department of Agriculture regarding preservatives used in the canning of foods.[27] It urged production for use instead of profit as the only remedy. The paper also showed concern over the financial crisis of 1907 and its effects. Lay-offs in Rochester plants were noted, especially among the clothing workers. Bryan and Taft were excoriated for having no platform on unemployment. Noting that "overproduction" was be-

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[26] Rochester Socialist, January 24, 1908.

[27] Ibid., January 31, 1908.

ing given as the cause of the depression, the Rochester Socialist declared: "Not while one man or woman or child goes hungry can there be over-production."[28] It urged the Socialist Party to gain control of the industrial machinery and put an end to unemployment. The paper blamed the depression on "under-consumption." Then it asked questions of its readers:[29]

> Why should thousands of people starve and freeze and vainly look for work while the means of production are standing idle? Is there any sense in it?.....
>
> Why should the capitalists be allowed to horde up the things we have produced but have not received? Why should they own the product if they did not produce it?.....
>
> Why should the capitalists privately own the means of production which we workers must use and have access to in order to live? Why should not all the people own them so that they could use them when in need of the things their labor would so easily produce?.....
>
> Socialism would not permit the conditions we have mentioned.

Herbert Steiner, speaking before the Labor Lyceum on "Child Labor, Its Cause and Cure," commended the National Child Labor Committee for exposing the exploitation of children in the United States. He noted that it had estimated that two million children under fourteen years of age were working in United States industries, and he proceeded to denounce this exploitation.[30]

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[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid., March 6, 1908.

[30] Rochester Socialist, January 24, 1908.

An editorial in the Rochester Socialist strongly argued that the interests of employers and workers were not identical. It pointed to the differences in the 1907 depression when the employers, as it said, wanted to close the factories, the employees to continue, and when social inequality between employer and employee extended even to marriage. It pointed to the absence of sickness benefits, to the absence of negligence damages refused to injured workers, to the refusal of wage increases, to the passage of wage increases to the consumer (who was the worker), and to the great unemployment of workers. It urged Socialist Party affiliation as the only solution, but meanwhile members were urged to ameliorate these conditions.[31]

Another editorial titled "Feeding Hungry Men" took note of the Rescue Mission's announced feeding of four hundred men the previous week. The Rochester Socialist's comment upon this was: "....how ineffectual it all is,....an unnecessary blot on our civilization... Is it any wonder that we cry, 'How long? Oh, how long?'"[32] In the same issue of the paper[33] an editorial was persuasively arguing for women to become more vigorous in their demands for suffrage. The Socialist Party, it

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[31] Ibid., February 28, 1908.

[32] Ibid., March 6, 1908.

[33] Ibid.

added, was the only party having a woman's suffrage plank in its platform.

When a current vice crusade sparked by the city police and the Rochester Herald was under way, the Rochester Socialist made a bitter attack upon the traditional solution for "vice," that is, arresting the girls found in "ladies' sitting rooms." Quoting a police official who said that the crusade would not stop until "we have cleaned up all this vice," the Rochester Socialist comments that "... it can't be done by putting a few saloonkeepers out of business and arresting a few girls and sending them to a house of refuge." There was no reform through this method, it asserted.[34]

> While there is profit to saloonkeepers to encourage 'ladies' 'sitting rooms,' they will spring up just as soon as the vigilance is relaxed, and while a system is in vogue where women can be virtuous in company with starvation and deprivation of all kinds, there will be prostitution. In the meantime, what about the men that make these women possible?

The Fabian Socialist, H. G. Wells, had written an article titled "Socialism and Motherhood" which appeared in full-page in the November 4, 1906 issue of the Rochester Herald. He advocated, among other things, that a state subsidy to mothers of children was likely under socialism instead of indiscriminate motherhood and illegitimacy. Commented the Herald: "An astounding and revolutionary suggestion."

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[34] Ibid., February 25, 1908.

On the educational front Rochester Socialists,[35] led by Mrs. Mabel Kelman, were highly critical of the fact that Rochester did not have free textbooks in the public schools and a system of equal pay for equal work for both men and women teachers. In the matter of housing the Rochester Socialist was urging that homes should be built for Rochester's working population "so that they shall not be compelled more and more to huddle together in blocks and tenements."[36] Saying that a chain is as strong as its weakest link, it scored the city and said that "....it was as clean, as moral, as law-abiding, as healthful... as its laboring and foreign sections are... kept in respect to cleanliness, light, buildings, etc."[36]

A curious prelude to the later and significant Professor Kendrick Shedd "flag" episode[37] is to be found in the Rochester Socialist for January 31, 1908. It quotes the Rochester Evening Times as saying: "In 'putting the red flag of Socialism above the Stars and Stripes,' Mrs. Stokes meant only to emphasize her breadth of human brotherhood, not to endorse the odious emblem of anarchy. The commentators who have assumed

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[35] Rochester Socialist, February 23, 1908.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Infra.

otherwise do a charming enthusiast needless injustice."[58]

Why did the Rochester Socialist abruptly discontinue publication? No answer is given in the paper itself, though a possible clue may be found in its last several issues. An advertisement in several issues repeats the statement: "If the Rochester Socialist is to be a success, subscribe! subscribe! subscribe! At once! At once!" "Probably financial support for the paper was insufficient to maintain it, particularly in this period when there was evidently much unemployment among the workers of Rochester. Also, the Socialists were pouring their funds into other directions, as in the financing of the Red Special in the 1908 presidential campaign of Eugene Debs.

It should be noted, also, that in 1905 Daniel De Leon became the editor of The People, the organ of the Socialist Labor Party. The dwindling Rochester membership of this party followed the ultra-Marxian thought of De Leon in the pages of The People until 1914, the year of his death.

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[58] Rochester Socialist, January 31, 1908. The Mrs. Stokes mentioned here is Rose (Pastor) Stokes, the wife of the "millionaire Socialist," James Graham Phelps Stokes, of Stamford, Connecticut.

The Role of Socialists in Rochester Labor (1905-1912)

It is not in any socialist-dominated unions of Rochester in this period that one finds the Socialists prominent. It is again, as in the previous period of 1900 to 1905, that individual Socialists primarily stand out in Rochester labor. It is true that the United Shoe Workers' Union had some dynamic Socialist members who were able to establish a close relation between that union and the Socialists. In 1911, their hall, Shoemaker's Hall, even became the headquarters of the Socialist Party for a short time. It is also true that most of the Socialist Party membership was recruited from the clothing workers in the city. Thus in this period, when the United Garment Workers Union still ruled the field in Rochester, the Socialists were to be found in it in strong numbers. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers was yet to be born in 1914 by Sidney Hillman's secession. It was only after 1914 that the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, an industrial union, appealed to the Socialists more than the Garment Workers' Union. There were Socialist Party members in the Lithographer's Union, Typographical Union, and the Brewery Workers' Union. The extent to which the Socialists permeated these unions, however, is not known.

The Lithographers' Union was one of the first to demand and get the forty-eight hour week in Rochester. This followed a lock-out lasting eleven months in 1906. The Typographical Union in 1905 also had gone on strike for the eight-hour day and had won. Socialists were involved in both of these strikes.

Two of the Socialist Party's outstanding leaders from 1900 to World War I were Joel Moses and Gad Martindale, the one a tailor and the other a shoemaker. Both of them were members of the Central Trades and Labor Council in 1907 when Gad Martindale, Socialist Party candidate for mayor in this year, was debarred forever from membership in the Council by resolution of the Council. The resolution also suspended the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union of which he was a member from the Central Trades and Labor Council. Further, it condemned the Labor Lyceum, requesting that all local unions do likewise. This resolution, adopted on October 31, 1907, was evidently provoked by a speech that Martindale had made at the Labor Lyceum on October 26, 1907, in which he was accused of "slandering, vilifying the Central Trades and Labor Council and misrepresenting the officers and delegates to this body."[39] The Boot and Shoe Workers' Union was asked by the Council to make Martindale publicly retract his "slanderous statements" made at the

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[39]Rochester Herald, November 1, 1907.

Labor Lyceum. This incident indicates that the Socialists were not strong enough in this body to prevent the passage of such a resolution. However, the fact that Martindale continued as a member of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, as an organizer, and even as an international vice-president for several years afterwards shows that his strength coupled with that of the other Socialists in the union was great enough to prevent his punishment by his own union. Martindale acquired a reputation as an effective speaker and was therefore a man with whom to be reckoned. In October, 1915, he was business agent of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union. Shortly after this incident Joel Moses, in the January, 1908 election of officers of the Central Trades and Labor Council, was elected a trustee of the organization. John S. Whalen, a Democrat, was president of the Central Trades and Labor Council at this time and was a member of the Tobacco Workers' Union.

Socialists sponsored a debate through the Labor Lyceum at the Cook Opera House on March 15, 1908, between Honorable J. M. E. O'Grady of Rochester and Professor George R. Kirkpatrick, New York Socialist, on the question, "Resolved, That an American workingman cannot be a Socialist."[40] Under Socialist Party auspices John Spargo, writer of The Bitter Cry of the Children, and

[40] Rochester Socialist, March 6, 1908.

The Common Sense View of the Milk Question, spoke at Plymouth Church on October 17, 1908, and criticized the major parties for not doing anything about unemployment. He said Gompers' support of the Democratic Party was a "Judas kiss." The Rochester Herald lauded him as a speaker and said he "held the audience that filled the large church for two hours." In the 1908 election Rochester labor was divided down the middle between Bryan and Taft, however, except for the Socialists among them.

A blast from the left at both Socialists and labor was delivered by Emma Goldman on October 18, 1908, when she spoke at Germania Hall. She "lambasted the Socialist Party as a coquettish young lady anxious to be flirted with and with whom no one cares to flirt."[41] She criticized Debs' Red Special as wasting the workers' hard-earned money. Declaring that the Socialists did not represent the workingmen, she said that on election day what was needed was a general strike.

In 1907, according to Morris Hillquit, there were sixteen national organizations of workers, representing a membership of 330,000, who had endorsed the Socialist program. And in 1909 the United Mine Workers of America, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, had declared itself in favor of the socialization

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[41] Ibid., October 19, 1908.

of all the material instruments of production.[42] Thus, while many of the details are lacking for Rochester, on a national basis the Socialists were becoming more and more influential in the ranks of labor.

Socialists in the Election of 1905-1912

In the elections of 1905 to 1912 there is a noticeable gain in total voting strength, more noticeable at the end of the period than the beginning. More activity is evident, also. Whereas the Socialist Labor Party had no city and county ticket in 1905, the Socialist Party put a full slate into the field and conducted a strong campaign. Most of the stumping from meeting to meeting was done by Henry Henderson, their mayoralty candidate, aided by William Lippelt, assemblyman candidate, Charles Swain, candidate for city treasurer, Mrs. Mabel Kennon, commissioner of common schools aspirant, James H. Brewer,[43] and Phillip Jackson. William Hilsdorf, Sr., and Julius Hoesterey, Sr. were among the candidates, the former for constable of the twentieth ward and the latter for assemblyman of the first district. Future leaders of the party, John J. O'Rourke, running for alderman of the nineteenth ward, and George Weber,

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[42]Morris Hillquit, Socialism Summed Up, pp. 105-106.

[43]James H. Brewer is an attorney in Rochester at present.

running for alderman of the eighth ward, were serving their apprenticeship in this campaign.

Meetings were held before the election at Schug's Hall located at the corner of Avenue A and Hollenbeck Street, at the corner of Sobieski Street and Hudson Avenue, and at Germania Hall. At this last meeting one speaker got an audience of nearly one thousand to agree with him that, in a comparison between workingmen and a lot of mules, the mules had more sense than the workingmen.[44] James H. Brewer also spoke at open air meetings at the corner of Main and Water Streets and at the Labor Lyceum in the Common Council chamber.

In Rochester for the first time the Social Democratic Party label carried in elections by the Socialist Party candidates was forbidden in 1905 by the courts. Hereafter the word "Democratic" in any connection was forbidden. Another feature of the election was the attempt by the Democratic mayoralty candidate, James Johnston, to obtain endorsement by the Socialist Party. This was refused by the Socialist Party, but the Rochester Herald raised the question of whether or not Johnston supported Socialist Party principles regarding private property. There was no answer to this.

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[44]Rochester Herald, November 6, 1905.

The results of the election of 1905 were indicative only of a stalemate, or could be construed as even a falling off, in the vote-gathering power of the Socialist Party. Garnering only between 1600 to 1700 votes for the major city offices,[45] the Socialist Party left the two major parties still undisputably leaders of the field with their 20,000 to 37,000 votes for major offices.

In the 1906 election for state and county offices, the Socialist Party slumped badly on the Rochester levels. The dip in voting power affected all the other parties as well, however. The electorate simply did not turn out. Rochester contributed several candidates to the Socialist Party's state ticket: John O'Rourke, for state comptroller, and Benjamin Feldman, 111 Joseph Avenue, Rochester, for Justice of the Supreme Court. Henry Henderson, defeated in 1905 for mayor, ran in 1906 for representative to Congress. Joel Moses was a contender for Special County Judge and George Weber for Surrogate. The Socialist Labor Party had a state ticket in the field, but there was no Rochester ticket, and there were no Rochesterians on their state slate.

With a polling of less than a thousand votes by the Socialist Party in Rochester for the governorship, it was with some trepidation that some Socialists con-

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[45] Official Monroe County Canvass and Statement, Election of 1905.

sidered the fact that if they did not get 10,000 votes in the state they would not continue on the ballot. However, this did not happen. Hearst evidently won the city with the help of some Socialist votes, though Hughes won the county.[46]

Neither was the election of 1907 very edifying in its results for the Socialist Party. No gains were evident in the city results. Gad Martindale, Socialist candidate for mayor, and the other major candidates of the party again failed to receive a thousand votes as compared with the nearly twenty thousand received by the candidates of the two major parties. This election began the reign of Hiram Edgerton and his political manager, George W. Aldridge (in 1910 elected representative to Congress). Professor George M. Forbes, later the chairman of the Board of Education, was elected a commissioner of common schools, also.

There is evidence that the campaigning in the 1907 pre-election period was greater than in the 1906 election campaign, yet no gain was registered by the party. Despite street meetings conducted by James H. Brewer at Brown Street and West Avenue, despite Labor Lyceum meetings and a debate on November 4, 1907, in

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[46] Rochester Herald, November 7, 1906.

which the able George R. Kirkpatrick,[47] Socialist, participated at the Y. M. C. A. Music Hall. Despite the depression of 1907, the Socialist Party of Rochester made a poor election showing in 1907. Some of Rochester's most able Socialists were on the ticket, including Gad Martindale, William Lippett, Joel Moses, and William Hilsdorf, Sr. (the last three named running for aldermen posts in their own wards). This election result may have had the sobering effect which precipitated Local Rochester into beginning the publication of the Rochester Socialist the following month. And again, in the election of 1907, the Socialist Labor Party placed no ticket in the field.

In the presidential campaign of 1908 there were several new aspects that made the campaign of more than ordinary interest. An attempt was made in 1908 to unite the Socialist Party with the Socialist Labor Party. Socialists such as Algernon Lee of New York favored it, though there were dissenters to such union.[48] In the end the union failed. The Socialist Labor Party entered the 1908 election with a national and state ticket of candidates, but none for city or county offices. Its

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[47] Professor Kirkpatrick became vice-presidential candidate of the Socialist Party in 1916 with Allen Benson as his running mate for president.

[48] Rochester Socialist, January 31, 1908.

vote was relatively insignificant. Debs was nominated for the presidency in Chicago in May of 1907, and the Socialist Party platform called for shortening the work day, one and one-half days rest per week, and forbidding child labor under sixteen years of age. Debs stressed the "do-nothing" policy of Roosevelt during the 1907 panic and the millions of unemployed.[49]

One of the most intensive of campaigns was carried on this year by the Socialist Party throughout the country. A chartered train (which became known as the Red Special), staffed by Debs and many other Socialist propagandists, made a tour around the country. It entailed a tremendous cost for such a small party. Station meetings, hall meetings, leaflet distributions by the hundreds of thousands, and innumerable speeches were made during this great tour.

The Red Special arrived in Rochester on October 2, 1908, and Debs was accorded a reception at the New York Central Station that the Rochester Herald called "the most enthusiastic ever tendered to the great or the near great under the roof of the old train shed."[50] He spoke at Convention Hall "amidst the greatest Social-

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[49]Floy Ruth Painter, That Man Debs, p. 144.

[50]Rochester Herald, October 3, 1908.

ist demonstration Rochester has ever seen."[51] It was estimated that about five thousand people listened to Debs. In his speech he asserted that "the wealth of the Rockefellers, the Vanderbilts, and the Goulds would be divided and the deeds transferred. . . . Five million unemployed exist, and the Democrats and the Republicans were helpless in the very abundance that workingmen have produced. . . ." He charged that neither major party dealt with any important issue in this campaign and called this "political degeneracy." He called the Republican Party the party of Wall Street and the Democratic Party an ally of Tammany. Debs also charged that:[52]

> . . . under this capitalistic system there are fifteen million tramps, 800,000 in the penitentiaries, and 600,000 living in open shame. Prostitution is a part of it, and suicide is increasing at a startling rate. The Socialist Party is the only one which recognizes woman as a human being.

A collection of $187.70 was made toward Red Special expenses. Joshua Wanhope, New York Socialist candidate for governor, also spoke at this meeting.

Among the presidential electors of the Socialist Party was Charles Furman of Rochester. The Socialist Labor Party listed several Rochesterians as electors of its party: Berthold Bauml, Carl Luedecke, Charles A.

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

Ruby, Moritz Schreiber, and John C. Vollertsen. From Rochester only Joel Moses, running for state comptroller, obtained a position on the state ticket of the Socialist Party. There were no Rochesterians on the 1908 state slate of candidates put forward by the Socialist Labor Party. Besides Moses other prominent candidates of the Socialist Party running for office in 1908 were Charles L. Swaim, for representative to Congress, and William Hilsdorf, Sr., for assemblyman.

The results of the 1908 election were an improvement over the last three previous years for the Socialist Party of Rochester. The major party candidates increased their votes to figures ranging from nearly twelve hundred to fourteen hundred, the last and highest figure being Debs' vote in the city. Nationally Debs had polled 421,520 votes, not twenty thousand over 1904, a fact attributed to the vote appeal of Bryan. All of the Socialist Labor Party candidates received under a hundred votes. Hughes and Taft won both the city and the state.

In the city and county elections of 1909 a full and notable slate of candidates was selected by the Socialist Labor Party. Among those who were candidates of the Socialist Party were:

William Pidgeon, Sr.--Alderman, First Ward
William Pidgeon, Jr.--Alderman, Tenth Ward
Richard Kitchelt--------Mayor
Joel Moses-------------City Treasurer
Mabel Kennon-----------School Commissioner
Carl H. Caspar---------Supervisor, Tenth Ward
Caspar Ruppel----------Assemblyman, Fifth District
John Zaches------------Assessor
William Lippelt--------Alderman, Fifth Ward
William Hilsdorf-------Supervisor, Twentieth Ward

Though this ticket appeared to include most of the heavyweights of the party at this time, there was an appreciable decline in the vote over the last year. The major candidates received from one thousand votes up to eleven hundred votes, a decrease of two to three hundred votes from the previous year.

It was in the election of 1910, however, that the Socialist Party, nationally and in Rochester, rose from the electoral plateau reached in 1908 and surged upwards. When Milwaukee went Socialist in this election, it elected the first Socialist Congressman, Victor Berger, and Emil Seidel became Milwaukee's first Socialist mayor. New York state as a whole experienced large Socialist gains and the Socialist Party superseded the Independence League Party as the third party in New York State. Columbus, Ohio, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, had close fights for supremacy by Socialists.[53]

Writer Charles Edward Russell, Socialist candi-

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[53] Rochester Union and Advertiser, November 10, 1910.

date for governor of New York, polled 1931 votes in Rochester in this election. Other Socialists for state offices also polled nearly two thousand votes, among them being William Lippelt of Rochester. Candidates sharing in the Socialist Party's increased popularity in Rochester were:

William Pidgeon, Jr.--District Attorney
Herbert T. Steiner----Representative to Congress
Joel Moses----------County Purchasing Agent
Carl H. Caspar--------Senator, Forty-Sixth District
William Pidgeon, Sr.--Assemblyman, Fourth District
John Zaches----------Supervisor, Eleventh Ward

In this election James L. Brewer became a candidate of the Independence Leaguers for District Attorney. Though the Socialist Party vote increased in 1910 in Rochester, the increase was not great enough to really threaten the two major parties. It was sufficient, however, to far outrun the Independence League Party.

The Socialist Labor Party had a state ticket on the ballot in 1910, but no county or legislative offices were sought. Only one Rochesterian, Carl A. Luedecke, 106 Lowell Street, candidate for state comptroller, was included on this state slate. The Socialist Laborites in Rochester managed to increase their vote over previous years, also, to a total of nearly two hundred.

A still stronger Socialist current was felt in Rochester, however, when in the 1911 city and county

election a definite trend in Socialist Party votes was evident. The Socialist Labor Party had no city or county ticket. Country-wide gains were made by the Socialist Party that press and politicians noted seriously. In Schenectady the Socialists were swept into all the city offices, headed by Reverend George R. Lunn, the new mayor, and Socialists elected their first assemblyman to Albany, H. H. Merrill. Five Socialist mayors and numerous councilmen were elected in Ohio, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Crookston, Minnesota, and New Castle and Reading, Pennsylvania, went Socialist.[54] The vote in the city of Rochester for the Socialist Party approached the three thousand mark, an increase in one year of approximately one-thousand votes. Mayor Hiram Edgerton headed the Republican sweep by winning the election, but the Democrats evidently lost votes to the Socialist Party.

For mayor in the 1911 election the Rochester Socialists selected George Weber,[55] remembered as a powerful speaker and a very active Socialist. Adding strength to the full slate was the best array of talent that the Socialists could muster. In this election Professor Kendrick Shedd of the University of Rochester was

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[54] Ibid.

[55] Personal interview, Warren Atkinson, July 1, 1952.

enlisted in the campaign to aid the Socialists of Rochester. The women of the party, Mrs. Mabel Kennon (wife of Henry Kennon, also a Socialist), Nettie Martindale (wife of Gad Martindale), Mary Hamen, Martha Lippelt (wife of William Lippelt), and Mrs. Florence Cross Kitchelt (wife of Richard Kitchelt) were full hilt in this campaign. Veteran Socialist Party campaigners included John E. O'Rourke, an agent of the Traveler's Insurance Company, running for alderman of the nineteenth ward, William Hilsdorf, Sr., blacksmith, running for alderman of the twentieth ward, Norman M. Thomas, alderman candidate from the tenth ward, and Carl Caspar, dedicated Socialist and clothing worker, supervisor candidate from the tenth ward. From the seventh and eighth wards veteran Socialists such as Max Goodman, Jesse Freeman, Morris Friedman, and William F. Fuhrman were candidates. Joel Moses was comptroller candidate on the Socialist slate, John L. Schmidt the treasurer candidate, with Thomas Sweeney, a relative newcomer, put up as President of the Common Council by the party. Veteran Socialist William Lippelt was assemblyman candidate in the fourth district. The Socialists fought in every ward in this election as in all the previous elections for the supervisor, aldermen, and constable posts, though many of them appearing as candidates do not have any previous newspaper or elec-

toral history. As a harbinger of good things to come, the Socialists could well be jubilant with the results of the 1911 election in Rochester, for in two years in succession the vote had risen greatly for their party. They could hopefully, with some basis in fact, visualize themselves as the beneficiaries of a definite local and national trend toward socialism.

This election was tied up with several Rochester issues involving the Socialists and had some bearing on the Rochester election results. One issue was the discontinuance of the social centers in the public schools. Another issue was the prohibition of any further Labor Lyceum meetings in the Common Council chamber by Mayor Edgerton in 1911. This second issue became a cause célebre' for the Rochester Socialists and was, in the nature of a free speech fight, a climax to their political campaign.[56]

The Battle for the Social Centers

When in April of 1907 the first social center was established at Number 9 School, corner of Joseph Avenue and Baden Streets, Professor Edward J. Ward was made superintendent of playgrounds and of all the social centers in Rochester's public schools. Number 9 School

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[56] Infra.

was the "central" social center. It had a large auditorium and was centrally located in the city. It also served one of the poorest districts of Rochester. Under Professor Ward social centers were opened at West High School and at Number 14, 26, 27, and 36 Schools. A great variety of activities was carried on in these centers: sports for girls and boys, singing, lectures, debating, dramatics, social clubs, and civic clubs. The library was made available evenings. A League of Civic Clubs developed from the social centers. Both Governor Charles E. Hughes and Lincoln Steffens visited these social centers and lauded them in high terms. "One of the best things in New York State," Governor Hughes said enthusiastically.[57] On November 4, 1909 at West High School Lincoln Steffens said that he was pleased to see that school buildings were being considered as public property. He praised the social centers.[58] Though a Socialist, Professor Ward was not diverted from devoting his full time and energy to the social centers, according to fellow Socialists of the period. To assist in the work Professor Ward selected Professor Kendrick Shedd, then professor of German at the University of Rochester, as director of Number 9 School social center.

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[57]Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

[58]Rochester Herald, November 5, 1909.

Prior to this appointment Professor Shedd had taught young people's classes in languages at the Baden Street Settlement for several years.[59]

Several incidents obscured the favorable side of the social centers and the social problems they aimed to alleviate and prevent. In fact, these several incidents are perhaps most responsible for destroying the social centers. From the start there were some reservations about the social centers. On February 23, 1908, Professor Edward Ward addressed the Labor Lyceum on "The Public School As a Social Center," and it was remarked that Professor Ward's address would be of special in-

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[59]Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952, and University of Rochester catalogues (1908, 1911). Some biographical facts regarding the stormy Professor Shedd follow:

He was born in Lima, N.Y., on September 26, 1866. He was a class of 1899 graduate of the University of Rochester. Then he attended the Teacher Academy, Canandaigua, N. Y., from 1889-1890. After this he went to the University of Berlin from 1890 to 1891. Returning to Rochester, he became an instructor in modern languages at the University of Rochester from 1891 to 1902, assistant professor of German from 1902 to 1906, and a professor from 1906 to 1912. From 1911 to 1915 he was director of the Rochester Socialist Sunday Schools and Young People's Socialist League. During the years 1915 to 1918 he was director of the Milwaukee, Wis., Socialist Sunday Schools. Then he returned to education again. He held positions as principal of the Forrestport, N. Y., High School, 1918 to 1919, a teacher of physical science at Geneva High School, 1919 to 1922, principal of Naples High School, 1922 to 1925, Romulus High School, 1926 to 1929, and as a private tutor in languages and mathematics in Rochester from 1929 to 1940. Retiring in 1940, he moved to Naples, N. Y., where he has lived with his second wife, Myra, since 1940. His first wife died in 1912 or 1913. He married again in 1915.

terest at the time because the social center "is existing under a term of probation."[60]

The social centers came under fire when, in January of 1909, a story appeared in the newspapers telling of a dance and masquerade at the Number 9 School that was held on a Sunday and alleging that both males and females were attired as males. Inasmuch as Number 9 School was located in a largely Jewish neighborhood and Sunday religious prohibitions were hardly applicable to them, the furor raised over this matter appeared to be misapplied. However, both Protestant and Catholic clergymen denounced this violation of the Sabbath, and the newspapers joined the chorus. In an editorial the Rochester Post-Express, burning with self-righteousness, gave its position: "....such a masquerade is of very doubtful propriety under any circumstances, but when it takes place on Sunday, in a public building, under the direction of an employee of the Board of Education, it is certainly highly objectionable, not to say indecent."[61]

Professor George Forbes, president of the Board of Education, and the University of Rochester were criticized for not disavowing a letter which Professor Shedd wrote to Mayor Edgerton about this incident. In his

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[60] Rochester Socialist, January 31, 1908.

[61] Rochester Post-Express, February 12, 1909.

letter Professor Shedd had denied that men and women had masqueraded in men's clothes. He wrote that it was strictly a women's masquerade, and that he and several others had chaperoned the affair. He accused the mayor of being opposed to social centers and civic clubs.[62] Newspaper criticism of Professor Shedd followed his use of the University of Rochester letterhead in this letter of denial to the mayor. Lewis Ross, president of the University of Rochester Board of Trustees, expressed his displeasure in a letter dated February 5, 1909, to Professor Henry Burton, acting President of the University. He thought Professor Shedd's letter "uncalled for, illogical, and a scurrilous attack on the Mayor of Rochester..... He should be taught 'noblesse oblige.'"[63] Especially did he attack Professor Shedd's use of the University of Rochester letterhead. Acting President Professor Burton then wrote a letter to Professor Shedd the following day, stating that three members of the Board and Lewis Ross disapproved of his letter to the mayor on the masquerade issue. He asked Professor Shedd not to use the University letterhead in letters of a "polemic nature" and to refrain from discussing further

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[62]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y. Letter of Kendrick Shedd, dated January 28, 1909, to Mayor Edgerton.

[63]Ibid.

the subject of his letter to the mayor. Prodded by Lewis Ross, Professor Burton also wrote a letter of apology to the mayor on this subject and pointed out that Professor Shedd's letter did not represent the sentiment of the University of Rochester. The morning of this same day, before receiving Professor Burton's letter, Professor Shedd had issued a published statement in which he said that his letter to Mayor Edgerton "was meant to be a private one, was published against my wish, knowledge, or consent." Professor Forbes, Lewis Ross, and Doctor William R. Taylor, second vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees, were told of this statement before it was issued.[64] Professor Shedd, in his reply to Professor Burton's letter of this same day, acidly remarked that Professor Burton's letter to him had come "all wet."[65]

From this point onward newspapers and religious groups mounted criticism against the social centers. Some argued against them from the viewpoint of economy and the utility value in using public funds in such a manner. Others, such as several Catholic societies who wrote several published letters to Mayor Edgerton, passed

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[64] Ibid., letter from Professor Shedd to Professor Burton, dated February 6, 1909.

[65] Ibid.

resolutions and protested the use of public funds for social centers, playgrounds, and trade or vocational schools. One of these groups stated it was "opposed to the aim of these social centers, which we believe to be disguised socialism."[66] While it is true that Professor Kendrick Shedd and Professor Edward Ward were Socialists, and Richard Kitchelt is mentioned as a speaker in behalf of free textbooks in the public schools before a West High School social center meeting, there is no evidence that the propagation of socialism was the major or pervasive influence operating in the conduct of the social centers. It was probably a fringe concern of many and a major concern of only a small number of persons who were affected and aided by the social centers.

However, the denouement of the social centers swiftly followed a highly provocative speech which was made by Professor Shedd on February 4, 1911, at Number 9 School social center under the auspices of the Women's Civic Club of the social center. He spoke on the topic "Privilege's Fear of Democracy" before an estimated nine hundred persons. On February 6, 1911, appeared a two-column headline in the Rochester Union and Advertiser:

The Red Flag Broader Than Stars and Stripes

In the story that followed, Professor Shedd was reported

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[66]Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 2, 1911.

as saying that "the red flag is broader than the Stars and Stripes or the flag of any other country..... The red stands for brotherhood, while the flags of countries stand for war..... I want to say that while I am a professor at the University of Rochester, I have not yet sold that institution my brains." The story stated that Professor Shedd's statements were applauded by all. This report also said that Professor Shedd declared (probably reminded of the masquerade issue of 1909):

> When I began my address I made it clear that I took the responsibility for anything I might say on my own shoulders. The University was not to be held responsible. I do not think that I said anything out of place, and anything I did say was fit to be uttered in a school house. The school house is dedicated to the constitution of the United States, which guarantees free speech, free press, and the right of free assemblage.

On the same day a headline carried the announcement of Mayor Edgerton proclaiming that Professor Shedd would not be allowed to speak in the public school buildings of Rochester again. A broader ban was made, however, as noted in the news story carrying this announcement. "Neither the schools nor any other public buildings may be used for the propagation of any such ideas as are reported to have been set forth by Professor Shedd at Number 9 Social Center. If he desires to talk on such lines, let him hire a hall. And," added the Mayor, "I am not going to have the American flag insulted

in any building."[67] The paper's story ended thus: "Commissioner of Safety Owen suggested that insults to the nation's flag would not be permitted in any building, a declaration which had the Mayor's hearty endorsement."[68]

On February 6, 1911, the Board of Education, which had social centers under their management, ordered that Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction Herbert S. West investigate the facts of the Shedd speech at Number 9 School. This same day the Council of Civic Clubs of Number 9 School social center passed a resolution which "disclaimed responsibility for sentiments and statements" made by Professor Shedd. It stated further that he expressed his own personal views, that he had been a director of the center for the previous two years, and that "we especially denounce Professor Shedd's unpatriotic reference to the Stars and Stripes and express our sincere belief in the loyalty and patriotism of the people who attend Number 9 Social Center."[69] Such a repudiation of Professor Shedd could not have been made if Socialists dominated the social centers, Patriotic organizations, the G. A. R. and the Sons of

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[67] Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 6, 1911.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., February 7, 1911.

the Revolution, issued public denunciations of Professor Shedd on February 6 and 7. "President Rush Rhees has made it clear that if action is deemed necessary it will not be made public until after it has been taken,"[70] said one newspaper report.

On February 8, 1911 the Board of Education met and passed a resolution "disapproving his address and ordering Assistant Superintendent of Schools West to adopt such regulations as shall prevent the use of social centers for socialistic propaganda."[71] Four out of the five members of the board then "made statements to the effect that they did not believe Professor Shedd had any intention to vilify the flag." Mr. West's report to the board said that it had been "essentially a plea for socialism." He said Professor Shedd "denies any intention of action disloyal to the Stars and Stripes," but that Professor Shedd did make some remarks that were "interpreted as disloyal to the American Flag, even by those of his friends who had invited him to give the address."[72] Professor Shedd had been given permission to speak at the social center by Mr. West himself, it was disclosed at this public meeting of the

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., February 9, 1911.

[72] Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 9, 1911.

board. Speaking to the board, Professor Shedd called attention to his formal statement sent to Mr. West on February 7, 1911.

In part this statement of Professor Shedd's regarding the whole affair stated that the news reports were "incomplete," "misleading," and "misrepresent" him. "The text can't be stated without stating the context," he wrote.[73] The crux of the matter was stated thus by him:

> ...I think the Mayor should not have prejudged the case without a full investigation. ...To him and everyone I say that I stand by everything I have said and wish I had said more....
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> With regard to his statement that I was propagating 'ideas presumably socialistic,' I quote a statement I made in closing my Saturday night address: 'I am not here to ask you to become Socialists, but I am here to ask you not to condemn and talk against Socialism until you have honestly read and studied two or three Socialist books and informed yourself concerning its doctrines.' Are these the words of a propagator of socialism? I ask only a fair hearing and that my audience would study the subject before casting it aside without consideration.
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> What I said should be allowed to be said in any school. Subjects that touch human beings should be discussed from every side, and in school more than other places. The Constitution of the United States guarantees free speech, free press, and the right of free assemblage. In what ways have I gone farther than these rights?
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> I do not expect any action by the University authorities looking toward my removal, since I clearly stated that I was speaking as an individual and not as a representative of that college.

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[73] Ibid.

> I never talk socialism in my class-rooms or allow it to be talked there, and as for my actions and speech outside I am only following the example of other college professors in interesting myself in questions which concern mankind.....
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> The allusion to the flag came in collaterally, and merely by way of illustration..... I referred to the fact that many people honestly thought the red flag of socialism stood only for murder and assassination, and that the Socialist was necessarily a man who sneaked about with dirk, pistol or bomb seeking whom he could destroy. I denied this. I said the flag symbolized the common color of the heart's blood, no matter what might be a man's race or color of his skin; that instead of standing for murder, the program of the red flag was universal peace and love and fraternity; that while the flag of our country, or of any other country, was geographically limited, the red flag of brotherhood was international; that its domain was the whole world and in that respect it was broader than the flag of any nation.....
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> I did not insult the American flag....and my heart holds, humbly do I hope it, the love of God, country and home and true love for the banner that waves over us..... I am convinced that the American flag stands for free speech, the right of assembly, and for the true brotherhood of man. If that flag or any other ever be raised by unworthy hands, or temporarily in a bad cause, it cannot affect the eternal verities for which the flag should stand.....
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> The red flag is merely a symbol of an economic movement which seeks reforms in the industrial world. It does not pretend to be a national flag and therefore has the standing of any other banner not national in character. Even the Mayor himself has a special flag..... This fact does not reflect in any way on the Stars and Stripes. Neither did my allusion to the red flag. This affair is a tempest in a tea-pot.....

Professor Shedd warned the Board of Education that free speech was on trial, not he, and said it would make a "serious blunder" if it put a ban on free speech in the social centers. He was exonerated by the Board.

. . . Before leaving the meeting, however, it was brought out that as recently as November 26, 1906, in an address before the Labor Lyceum, Professor Shedd had attacked socialism. He was quoted as saying then: "I believe that an anarchist is a socialist gone to seed, and I do not believe that there is very much difference between a revolutionist, a socialist, and an anarchist."[74] He told the Board that he was an "ass" then, for he had not properly informed himself on the subject. Later Kendrick Shedd said that Joel Moses and other Socialists pounced upon him after this meeting at the Lyceum and a few days afterwards he became a member of the Socialist Party. In explanation of this apparently sudden conversion, he stated later that it was not actually an overnight change, for he had been emotionally and intellectually prepared for it long before it took place.[75]

Prior to his exoneration by the Board of Education, it had been announced by the Labor Lyceum that Professor Shedd was to speak on February 12, 1911. The conflict with the Mayor's "embargo" on the professor was high-lighted, therefore. On February 10, 1911, the Mayor stated that he had not changed his mind. "I have

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[74] Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 7, 1911.

[75] Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

never backed down from any assertion yet unless it has been clearly shown to me that I have made a mistake," he said.[76] On the following day, however, it was announced by the secretary of the Labor Lyceum, Norman M. Thomas (incidentally, a Socialist Party member of long standing), that Professor Shedd was scheduled to speak February 26, 1911, instead of February 12, 1911, at the Labor Lyceum. A meeting was held at the Shubert Theatre on February 12 at which Frank Warren, editor of the Socialist Appeal to Reason, and the Socialist Frank Bohn of New York City were speakers. Warren had just been pardoned by President Taft after his conviction for sending "incendiary material" through the mails. This meeting passed a resolution rebuking Mayor Edgerton and assured Professor Shedd that "we are with him heart, soul, and property in his fight for free speech in Rochester."[77]

While the Shedd and Edgerton battle was building up to a climax and showdown, the death knell was sounded to the social centers at a mass meeting held at Number 9 School on February 17, 1911. School Commissioner Isaac Adler announced that "because of lack of funds",

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[76] Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 11, 1911.

[77] Ibid.

all social center work would end as of March 1, 1911. This announcement was greeted with cries of "Shame!" and hisses. Explained Adler: "Cutting down the appropriation was simply a desire to cut down the tax levy."[78] In retrospect this explanation seems to be far too oversimplified.

The Rochester Union and Advertiser considered another reason for the closing of the social centers and the banning of Professor Shedd from the Labor Lyceum. Its conclusion was that the Republican administration was courting favor and popularity with the electorate, and that Mayor Edgerton was taking orders from George Aldridge, Republican political boss. Later Kendrick Shedd was to offer as his explanation the religious opposition to the social centers and the opposition of George Aldridge and the business interests behind him. Kendrick Shedd later said that Mayor Edgerton "was a nice man who did what he was told."[79] The Socialist fight on the free speech issue and the Labor Lyceum's later support of Professor Shedd, which resulted in their expulsion from the Common Council chamber, blunted the battle that probably would have been made to continue

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[78] Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 18, 1911.

[79] Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

the social centers. The social centers issue was much submerged by personalities and the free speech issue. Professor Shedd's association with the masquerade episode and his "red flag" speech offered an ideal pretext, if so it was, for the abolition of the social centers. "Economy" regarding the social centers appears to have been used as a respectable rationalization and was seized upon at a most opportune time.

A Labor Lyceum committee composed of Joel Moses, Joseph Bloss, and Norman M. Thomas[80] met with Mayor Edgerton on February 23, 1911, to get him to rescind his decree, but he refused to permit Professor Shedd to speak in any public building. Two meetings were therefore scheduled for February 26, 1911, at which Professor Shedd was to speak on "Free Speech," one at the Shubert Theatre sponsored by the Labor Lyceum in the afternoon and the other at Turn Hall sponsored by the Turn Verein in the evening. At the Shubert Theatre meeting Gustave Strebel of Syracuse, Socialist Party candidate for lieutenant-governor, joined Kendrick Shedd and a Reverend John A. Copeland on the platform. Before an estimated two thousand persons crowded into the Shubert Theatre that day an impromptu protest meeting was attempted, led

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[80]Except for Joseph Bloss, all were Socialist Party members.

by Professor Shedd, in the Labor Lyceum's usual meeting place in the Council chamber. But this meeting had to be held on the steps of the City Hall because the doors were barred to them. Then the crowd marched to the Shubert Theatre.[81]

"Shedd was all afire with Socialism," as one of his fellow Socialists has expressed it, but Professor Shedd's Socialist philosophy was not typically Marxian. As a language professor, he had become interested in the definition of words. Capitalism was understood by him to mean "self-centered individualism," and what he termed on several occasions "societism or humanitism" was represented by Socialism.

In a memorable speech that Sunday afternoon, Professor Shedd traced previous fights for freedom and called the Mayor's refusal to permit him to speak at the Labor Lyceum in the Common Council chamber "persecution." He made a strong defense of the social centers. He pictured to his audience how the social centers' meetings of a Saturday evening ran into an average of seven hundred to one thousand persons, and how all this was now destroyed. He said that he had received a letter from Professor Edward Ward, to whom Shedd attributed the founding of Number 9 School social center and

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[81]Personal interview, Isadore Tishler, May 3, 1952.

all the others, in which Professor Ward said: "I guess what Jane Addams told me is going to be true; that it will be a long, hard fight for democracy before the social center movement and the opportunity for the citizens to use their property for political discussion is granted." He quoted the constitution at length on liberty. He called those who undermined the constitution the real flag vilifiers. He condemned the gag placed upon free men when their views did not accord with those who had special privileges and vested interests. He reminded his listeners of the Declaration of Independence and of Lincoln's Gettysburg address in his plea for a return to the Declaration's principles of freedom.[82] His speech was greatly applauded.

At the Shubert Theatre meeting, of which Joel Moses was chairman, a resolution was passed requesting the Mayor to rescind his decree against Kendrick Shedd. In a brief speech, Reverend John A. Copeland "attacked Mayor Edgerton as an anarchist."[83] Copies of the Shedd address were circulated throughout the city by the Labor Lyceum and the Socialists. The daily newspapers took sides on the question of the validity of the Mayor's

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[82]Kendrick F. Shedd, Right of Free Speech (Labor Lyceum of Rochester, New York, 1911).

[83]Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 27, 1911.

action. The Rochester Herald supported the Mayor's position on the ground that city buildings could be forbidden to anyone if the city disapproves. The Union and Advertiser, in an editorial headed "An Irrepressible Tempest in a Teapot,"[84] accused Mayor Edgerton of knowing little about Socialism, called the ban a political maneuver sparked by George Aldridge, city Republican boss, and made this bland observation about the socialists:

> They propose to correct all the evils to which flesh is heir. And if they proceed in a lawful and orderly manner to cultivate among the people their tenets of regeneration why should there be any complaint on the part of those who do not agree with them?

In another article of the same day this same paper amplified its position with the statement that

> ....that simply means that the city buildings are not to be used by those who are not in the majority..... Would the Mayor prohibit a meeting of any kind in which a considerable number of non-Socialists were interested? We think not, for there would be no political play in it.

The finale to this episode occurred on April 4, 1911, when the Labor Lyceum was barred from the Common Council chamber by the Mayor for permitting Professor Shedd to speak there the previous Sunday afternoon. Engineer E. A. Fisher, legal custodian of the building,

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[84] Rochester Union and Advertiser, February 28, 1911.

sent out a notice that the Council chamber would be locked the following Sunday as directed by the Mayor. There is no good reason," said the Mayor, "why the Council chamber should be used for other than public purposes."[85]

As regards Kendrick Shedd and the University of Rochester, a letter was written by Rush Rhees to Lewis Ross, Board of Trustees chairman, dated April 15, 1911, in which he said: "In two conferences of the Executive Committee no formal action was taken because of our desire to avoid the possibility of any charge of undertaking to interfere with freedom of thought and speech." He noted the "unwelcome notoriety" to the University of Rochester.[86]

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[85]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y. News clipping without identifying data.

Once before, on October 13, 1907 (according to Rochester Herald, October 14, 1907), the Mayor had noted the publication of a highly inflammatory verbatim report of a Labor Lyceum controversy. On October 16, 1907, the Mayor asked Joseph B. Bloss, chairman of the Lyceum, to make a statement that the Lyceum did not countenance treasonable statements. (Rochester Herald, October 16, 1907).

[86]Ibid.

CHAPTER V

THE CASE OF KENDRICK SHEDD
vs.
THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

Dating from the amazing "masquerade" episode of 1909 in which Professor Kendrick Shedd was one of the principals, he was under criticism from University of Rochester officials and the general public. As Professor Shedd appeared more and more before the public in his socialist activities, he became better known and a more controversial figure. At no time was he ever accused, however, of preaching socialism in his classrooms. He himself asserted this strongly in his statement to the Board of Education in connection with his hearing before that body over the tumult raised by his "red flag" speech at Number 9 School social center on February 4, 1911. This is borne out, also, by students of Professor Shedd at the University.

However, little more than a week after this sensational speech of Professor Shedd at the social center, Rush Rhees, President of the University of Rochester,

received a letter from Lewis P. Ross,[1] chairman of the Board of Trustees, from Clearwater, Florida, dated February 13, 1911, in which he protested Professor Shedd's "wildly talking again..... He has no right to put us in a position where we must incur odium by dropping him--or by keeping him and thereby being held as endorsing his ideas. I hoped after we had the trouble with him last year[2] that he would refrain from his loose talking."[3] Two days later he wrote another letter to Rush Rhees on the same subject, saying "....the red flag ....stands for anarchistic socialism,....stands for the abrogation of law."[4] He also wrote that he concurred with the "position taken by the Board at the meeting of the Executive Committee."[5] This last statement refers

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[1]Lewis P. Ross was a manufacturer and wholesaler of boots, shoes, and rubbers. His place of business was 67-75 Mortimer St. and 34042 Division St. He had a home on East Avenue. From 1903 to 1915 he served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of Rochester. It is likely that Mr. Ross had some relations with the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union local in Rochester and probably came in contact with some of the Socialist Party leaders in that union, among them being such men as Frank Sieverman and Gad Martindale.

[2]This is probably a reference to the masquerade episode of 1909 involving Professor Shedd.

[3]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y.

[4]Ibid. Letter dated February 15, 1911.

[5]Ibid.

to one of the Executive Committee meetings which was held regarding action that should be taken against Professor Shedd on the "red flag" speech and its sequel. The subsequent decision by the Board of Trustees was to take no formal action.

Entering into the Kendrick Shedd vs. University of Rochester case is George Eastman, Rochester's most prominent industrialist, and his relations with President Rush Rhees and the Board of Trustees. In 1898 Eastman had been quoted as saying, "I am not interested in education,"[6] but by 1912 he had greatly changed his mind. He and Rush Rhees had become friends. In 1911 occurred the several Kendrick Shedd incidents which came to George Eastman's attention. Rush Rhees had been trying to get Eastman to donate money toward education in Rochester, but up to 1912 Eastman had donated only $78,500 toward the Eastman Building (a science building located on the Prince Street campus). In 1912, however, George Eastman agreed to donate a half-million dollars to the University of Rochester's endowment fund if the University would match the sum during the year 1912, the equivalent amount to be raised by the Board of

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[6]John R. Slater, Rhees of Rochester (Harper and Brothers, N. Y., 1946), p. 156. Incidentally, there is no mention of Kendrick Shedd in this Rush Rhees biography.

Trustees.[7] Rush Rhees wanted this fund (1) for increasing salaries of the faculty and (2) for a separate College for Women to be built in 1912. This sum was actually raised by the University before December 31, 1912, as stipulated by George Eastman.[8]

In November of 1911, when Professor Kendrick Shedd was Rochester's most controversial Socialist, and when his dismissal by the University was being considered, George Eastman was alleged to have told Rush Rhees that "that wild Indian must be fired before I give another penny to the University." Professor Shedd mentioned this to his close associates at the time.[9] It was published later in a Socialist newspaper,[10] and Professor Shedd still adheres to this statement. Moreover, according to Professor Shedd, in the several conferences which he had with Rush Rhees and Joseph Alling, treasurer of the Board of Trustees, and while his dismissal was under consideration, he was told that Mr. George Eastman was adamant in his refusal to grant money to the University

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[7] Ibid., p. 165.

[8] Democrat and Chronicle, December 30, 1912.

[9] Isadore Fishler and William Pidgeon, Jr.

[10] New York Sunday Call, January 31, 1915. In this feature story by Julian Poyronouw the writer states that his story was "according to Shedd."

and that he, Professor Shedd, would be responsible for keeping the University from getting any funds from him. Thus the half-million dollar donation, according to Professor Shedd, was in the balance and conditional upon his resignation. It was this half-million dollar gift that dissuaded Rush Rhees from accepting an offer to go to Amherst as President in 1912.[11]

Before this crisis came in the life of Professor Shedd, however, another event intervened which precipitated the severance of relations between Professor Shedd and the University of Rochester. On November 3, 1911, Professor Shedd made a pre-election speech at the Burtis Auditorium in Auburn, New York. Frank Bohn, New York City Socialist, spoke on the same platform. The following day a story appeared in the Auburn Daily Advertiser with the following headline:

Talked The Real Thing
Speakers at Socialist Mass Meeting
Declared Their Unbelief in the Future
And Patriotism--Red Flag
The Only Banner

The story might have been overlooked and forgotten, but the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle noticed this story, and on November 15, 1911, it reprinted the Auburn paper's account, adding to it its own comments. It headlined:

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[11]John R. Slater, op. cit., p. 288.

"Neat Step" With His Songs
Professor K. P. Shedd Said by Auburn
Newspaper to Have Been Applauded For It

The Democrat and Chronicle said that Professor Shedd "fairly outdid himself..... Not only were his utterances all that his most devoted admirers could have demanded, but also he sang and 'did a neat little step along the footlights.'"[12] It then quoted Professor Shedd from the Auburn paper's story:

> 'We are more interested in the present, here and now, than in the hereafter. Who cares for an old harp in the world beyond?' said Professor Kendrick P. Shedd of Rochester. 'I preach the doctrine of discontent. I sign my letters, 'Yours for the revolution.' I belong to the grandest rebel army ever known. Jesus was crazy, Columbus was crazy, Gene Debs is crazy--Bohn is crazy as a loon!'
>
> The speaker described the patriotism taught in the schools as a little bit of 2 x 4 patriotism. 'Worship the old flag. Get down on your knees and lick its folds. The country! right or wrong!' Apparently everyone was stupefied by these remarks. No one hissed.
>
> The speaker said he recognized no land borders. His patriotism was one that included all countries and is represented by the red flag. His words recalled Mr. Hale's story "The Man Without a Country." Professor Shedd explained that the Rochester University, where he teaches German, is in no way responsible for what he said. 'They don't want to be. I teach languages there, not socialism. If I did, I'd walk. In fact, I have a letter I mean to have framed which tells me I'd better get out.'
>
> Professor Shedd carried a red ticket in his hand while he spoke and sang two original songs, one entitled "The Little Red Ticket," to that popular air "The Old Gray Bonnet," and the other

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[12]Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, November 15, 1911.

to the tune of "Old Cabin Home," which told of 'Milwaukeeizing' the cities of the land.

The songs were accompanied by a neat little step along the footlights. The audience, astonished for a moment at the demonstration, sat silent, but finally recovered and applauded the skit.

The speaker said that before he saw the light he used to go down to the polls, and though it might be against his will he would 'vote for the rotten old cheese. Today,' he said, 'I am a revolutionist with a capital R.'

The Auburn Daily Advertiser was then quoted by the Democrat and Chronicle as saying that Frank Bohn had made the statement that "the devil and a donkey got beastly drunk and then wrote the United States Constitution."[13]

The reaction to this story was quick in coming. On November 16, 1911, the Rochester Post-Express editorialized that Professor Shedd was unfit to be a university professor. The Democrat and Chronicle editorial for November 16, 1911, more restrained, said: "Ridiculing the flag in a vaudeville show never yet brought Old Glory into contempt..... The good people of Auburn need have no apprehensions. 'The flag is still there.'" One of the trustees of the University of Rochester, Doctor L. Emmett Holt[14] of New York City, in a letter to Rush Rhees dated November 20, 1911, expressed his "interest and disgust" in the Democrat and Chronicle story of

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[13]Ibid.

[14]University of Rochester catalogue (1911) lists Dr. Holt's address as 14 W. 55th Street, N. Y. C.

Kendrick Shedd's speech at Auburn. "The retention of a man like this on the faculty,"[15] he wrote, "is a blot upon the institution, and I should certainly feel that he should be dismissed at the end of the current year if not before,....influence pernicious upon a body of young men." In reply to this letter Rush Rhees wrote on November 21, 1911:[16]

> ....so far as I know your opinion is shared by us all here. Some investigations are now on with reference to a claim that the account in the Democrat and Chronicle is a gross misrepresentation. As soon as those investigations are completed our executive committee will have a meeting and either act upon the matter as a committee or arrange to call the trustees together for action.

To Professor Shedd's defense came a letter to Rush Rhees, dated November 22, 1911, from Frank Bohn, who had shared the platform at Auburn with Professor Shedd. He wrote in part: "One of the Auburn papers....was inspired by a desire to injure the cause we represented before the citizens of Auburn."[17] He declared that Professor Shedd had said or done nothing "which could lead to the slightest criticism from the authorities of the University." Arguing that newspaper reports were unreliable, he said further that they were "....sensational reading.

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[15]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library. Letter to Rush Rhees, November 20, 1911.

[16]Ibid., November 21, 1911.

[17]Ibid., November 22, 1911.

matter for an uninformed public." Professor Shedd, he added, was "able, well-known, and made good sensational copy." He ended by writing that he trusted that the newspapers could have some new sensation by the time his letter arrived.

In his own defense Professor Shedd made a statement to a Rochester Evening Times reporter on November 22, 1911, in the presence of Conrad Koegler, president of the University of Rochester Socialist Study Club. He first stated that the account of his speech at Auburn was a gross misrepresentation for political purposes. He denied that he implied atheism and treason in his speech. He said the paper came out on the eve of the election, and that "it was feared in Auburn that the Socialists would carry the city." Professor Shedd's version of his speech in part, as he told this reporter, was:

> I vote with a million Americans who care little about playing on a golden harp in the hereafter, but who are vitally interested in having their fellow men enjoy all the justice and comfort and good things of the here-now, the present. (That was my atheism.)
>
> I also declared that I voted with a million people to whom it is a matter of little concern where the U. S. leaves off and where Mexico and Canada begin, who care but little for the 8 x 4 patriotism that is taught in our schools and churches but who believe in a grander, an international patriotism that knows no boundary lines and includes all humanity. (That was my treason.)

"My father was a soldier," he informed this same reporter. "He was killed in the Civil War..... I love my country.. ..."[18] To this reporter he again defined Socialism as "societism," as "humanitism," as opposed to "individualism." Conrad Koegler also was quoted as saying to this newspaperman: "Any anarchistic or red garment that has been thrown about him is nothing more or less than a boundless love for his fellow man."

Two days after Professor Shedd had spoken in his own defense the Executive Committee[19] of the Board of Trustees met (on November 24, 1911) to consider the Kendrick Shedd case. It examined the reports of the Auburn speech made by Professor Shedd as related in the Rochester and Auburn newspapers. It also got a confidential report from an agent sent to Auburn by the Board of Trustees. This agent interviewed two different reporters from two Auburn papers, and they substantially

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[18]One aspect of Professor Shedd's patriotism and love of country was demonstrated later when he quit the Socialist Party in 1917 because the Socialist Party took an unequivocal anti-war position and committed itself to oppose U. S. participation in the war effort. He said in a personal interview on June 24, 1952 that he thought the St. Louis resolution was "treasonable."

[19]On the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees in 1911 were: Lewis P. Ross, chairman; Dr. William S. Ely, 1st vice-chairman; Rev. William R. Taylor, 2nd vice-chairman; Charles Miller Williams, secretary; Joseph T. Alling, treasurer. Charles Miller Williams was the Executive Committee's attorney. (Source: University of Rochester catalogue, 1911.)

confirmed as reliable their own reports to their newspapers. The agent was reported as having interviewed a Socialist, an attorney, and a meat market worker in regard to their reaction to Professor Shedd's speech. Umbrage was taken by the Executive Committee at Professor Shedd's reference in his Auburn speech to a letter from the University of Rochester asking him to leave and his saying that he meant to frame it. This evidently referred to the masquerade and letterhead issue of 1909. Discussed by the Executive Committee, also, was Professor Shedd's "lack of interest in scholarship" and "criticism of relations with students."[20] Professor Shedd's own defense interview in the Rochester Evening Times was also noted.

The secretary of the Executive Committee formulated a sketchy outline of charges against Professor Shedd which he labeled "The Case." In this "case" were listed (a) "impulsive intemperance," "sensationalism,"--"inconsistent with the sober, thoughtful, scientific attitude to truth for which an institution of higher learning must stand"; (b) "His acknowledged absorption in other interests and indifference to the higher intel-

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[20]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y., Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of November 24, 1911.

lectual concerns of the department of learning which he represents in the university are inconsistent with the proper mark of an institution of higher learning"; and (c) "His disregard of formal, official admonition and unbecoming public reference to that formal admonition indicates lack of loyalty to the university which can only be regarded with extreme seriousness."[21]

The Executive Committee then recommended that Joseph T. Alling,[22] whom Professor Shedd later considered a good friend of his, and Rush Rhees ask Professor Shedd's resignation. If he refused, the Executive Committee then recommended, Professor Shedd was to be given formal notice that six months after January 1, 1912, "his connection with the University of Rochester shall terminate" and that, in this event, "leave of absence be given him from January 1, 1912, other provisions be made for his classes."[23] Also, the Executive Committee recommended, the question of publicity was to be referred to Joseph Alling and Rush Rhees after conferring with Professor Shedd. These recommendations were carried.

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Joseph T. Alling, treasurer of the Board of Trustees, was president of the Alling & Cory Company, Inc., of Rochester.

[23] Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y. Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, meeting of November 24, 1911.

Professor Shedd's salary, it was also decided, would be paid to July 1, 1912, in the event of his resignation.[24]

Three days after this Executive Committee meeting, on November 27, 1911, Professor Shedd met with Joseph Alling and Rush Rhees and discussed with them the Auburn speech and the Executive Committee's recommendations. It was at this time that Professor Shedd was told of George Eastman's position by Joseph Alling. Also, Professor Shedd later recalled, Rush Rhees and Joseph Alling admitted to him that he, Kendrick Shedd, had never propagandized in class.[25] In this first meeting with them Professor Shedd did not yield to the proposal that he resign, for the next day, November 28, 1911, he sent a letter to Rush Rhees. In this letter he said he would be willing to promise not to speak in public for two years, and he gave these reasons: (1) he would have time to change his vocation; (2) he could save to support his three children ("this," he said, "gives me the most worry"); (3) hard feeling would die; and (4) "then I could more truthfully do my own resigning, and hosts of very difficult and embarrassing explanations on both

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

sides could be saved."[26] Professor Shedd mentioned in addition that his daughter was to enter college the next year. He and Rush Rhees had a meeting the next day. Years later[27] Kendrick Shedd stated that at this point his wife was mentally ill, that she was hospitalized much of the time, and that he was in bad financial straits, being much in debt. It was under these circumstances that he met Rush Rhees the following day.

On November 29, 1911, Professor Shedd met Rush Rhees and made then his fateful decision to resign. On December 1, 1911, Professor Shedd wrote his resignation to President Rush Rhees:[28]

> My dear Mr. President:
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> It has come to my notice that the University of Rochester, my Alma Mater, in whose welfare I am deeply interested, is being severly criticized because of certain reported utterances of mine upon the public platform.
>
> In view of this fact I therefore tender my resignation as a member of the faculty of this institution, same to take effect if the trustees so desire, at the close of the current college year.
>
> Having served the college continuously for more than a score of years, I shall leave it

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[26]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y. Kendrick Shedd letter to Rush Rhees dated November 28, 1911.

[27]Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952. This is substantiated by other Socialists who knew Kendrick Shedd at that time.

[28]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y.

with profound gratitude to the Board of Trustees, to my colleagues on the faculty, and members of the student body for numberless favors and courtesies, and with a host of precious and abiding memories to cheer the coming years.

Very truly yours,

Kendrick Shedd

On December 6, 1911, Professor Shedd wrote to Rush Rhees asking him to make a proposal to the Board of Trustees as follows: He promised that he would not appear before the public as a speaker between the time of writing and the date of his final severance with the University.[29] In view of Professor Shedd's "admirable spirit," as expressed by Rush Rhees, both Rush Rhees and Joseph Alling asked the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees to modify its instructions. Two modifications were requested by them. First, they requested that the resignation of Professor Shedd take effect at the end of the academic year, and, secondly, they asked that the Executive Committee accept Professor Shedd's voluntary proposal to avoid public appearance during the remainder of University service. The Committee moved the acceptance of these modifications and Rush Rhees was delegated the power to accept the resignation of Professor Shedd, the effective date of his severance from the Uni-

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[29] Ibid.

versity of Rochester was made July 1, 1912.[30]

To a correspondent Rush Rhees wrote on December 19, 1911, that the resignation was confidential and asked him to recommend a good German teacher. He also said this of Professor Shedd:[31]

> This whole matter (of Shedd's resignation and promise not to speak until the end of the academic year) has been inexpressibly distressing, but in the final culmination the very best of a nature which at its best is most lovable came to the surface.... Would to God we could find a suitable outlet for the poor man!

The story of the resignation of Professor Shedd was not released for publication until the early part of February, 1912. Wide publicity resulted. The New York Times attributed to the two flag speeches made by Professor Shedd the cause of the closing of the social centers in Rochester.[32] The New York World editorialized:[33]

> ....The request for the resignation is said to be due to the activity of the professor among local Socialists. It is alleged that he once went so far as to declare that the red flag was broader than the flag of this or any other country.

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[30]Ibid., Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees minutes.

[31]Ibid., Rush Rhees letter, dated December 19, 1911, to Prof. Henry C. Vedder, Crozier Theological Seminary, Chester, Pa.

[32]New York Times, February 14, 1912. Clipping found with Rush Rhees Correspondence at Rush Rhees Library.

[33]New York World, February 16, 1912, Clipping found with Rush Rhees Correspondence.

> It is to be hoped that this statement does injustice to the trustees of the University of Rochester. If it does not, then they have by their action done injustice to Professor Shedd, to their university, and to the people of the United States. They have offended against every principle of intellectual liberty and every right of free speech. Here is a tyranny over university education worse than any that has been attempted of late in any country outside of Russia.....
>
> Is it only money that can talk at an American university?.....

A curious development and epilogue to this case is to be found in a letter which Professor Shedd wrote to Rush Rhees on May 27, 1912. He stated that he refused to accept money for the education of his children from the University of Rochester. In reply Rush Rhees, on June 8, 1912, wrote that "this offer was from Mr. Alling and some others of your friends on the Board."[34]

In retrospect Kendrick Shedd was to say later regarding his "resignation" from the University of Rochester that the Board of Trustees consisted of all good Republicans and Democrats, all good business men. He attributed two major motives for their action: first, they desired to save the University of Rochester from a "socialist" university reputation, and secondly, they desired to get "moneyed" men to contribute to the growth

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[34]Rush Rhees Correspondence, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y. Letter from Rush Rhees to Kendrick Shedd, dated June 8, 1912.

of the university. On this last point Kendrick Shedd had in mind such men as George Eastman.[35]

Out of all the material on this case, some crucial questions arise. How far can a university professor express himself in public if in so doing he brings about a flight of funds away from a university, which may mean its financial decline and extinction? Assuming a privately endowed university to be dependent upon private funds for its very existence, is the freedom of speech of a university professor limited by the financial effect he may have upon a university with which he may be associated at the time? If such a limitation exists, would publicly endowed universities permit greater freedom of speech to university professors? The legal and constitutional rights and ideals of freedom of speech are also tied up inextricably with such a situation. Where are the legal limits to be drawn in such a case? Should a professor's limits to freedom of speech be in any way different from those of any other American citizen? On these questions, it may be, no two persons may agree.

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[35]Personal interview, Kendrick Shedd, June 24, 1952.

CHAPTER VI

ROCHESTER SOCIALISM -- 1912 to 1917

The Peak of Social Consciousness

In the period between 1912 and 1917 radicalism was increasingly popular. Extraordinary numbers of persons appear to have been caught up in some social movement. Consciousness of social problems and social inadequacies was at its height. The desire to do something about them, and the feeling that something could be done, was also the prevalent sentiment. Social optimism rose to counter inertia and pessimism. Up to the outbreak of World War I there appeared to be nothing that would interfere with the inevitable changes which were foreseen and were confidently awaited. This was a national phenomenon shared by Rochesterians in full measure.

The Brotherhood meetings conducted by Dr. Algernon S. Crapsey were shifted over to the Victoria Theatre, and radicals in religion and politics were invited along with the conservatives to express their views there. The People's Sunday Evening Hour meetings also sponsored speakers such as Lincoln Steffens

to address them at the Shubert Theatre. Clarence Darrow, speaking on "Capital and Labor," Woodrow Wilson and his New Freedom, Victor Berger, Mayor George R. Lunn of Schenectady, Doctor Wise, Charles Edward Russell, Emma Goldman, and Walter Rauschenbusch were adding their voices in Rochester to a crescendo of potential social change. Theodore Roosevelt, in a conversation with Rauschenbusch, was threatening to take over "everything that is good in socialism and leave the bad,"[1] but his Bull Moosers lost the election of 1912 and put such views to naught. Rauschenbusch felt that socialism was coming to America. In 1912 he wrote his second great book, Christianizing the Social Order, in which he again fused his religious views with his economic and political ideas in a magnificent expression of the social gospel. The women suffragists and the prohibitionist organizations carried on a developing and more intense campaign. Doctor Crapsey spent the summer of 1912 as a vagabond preacher and held open air meetings with the Socialists. The Republican Party was split wide open, and the Socialists were accusing the Progressives of stealing much of their "radical" platform, especially that part dealing with immediate reforms. Not the least active in the crea-

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[1]Dores Sharpe, Walter Rauschenbusch, pp. 413-414.

tion of the social ferment in Rochester at this time were the Socialists.

Construction of Progressive Working People's Lyceum

Since Kendrick Shedd was banned from speaking in the public buildings of Rochester, and the Labor Lyceum had been banned by Mayor Hiram Edgerton from meeting in the Common Council chamber as of April 4, 1911, a new place to conduct forums was needed by the Rochester Socialists. An organization was already at hand for the purpose. The Progressive Working People's Lyceum, which was composed of wage earners and had been organized around 1908, had a membership of twenty-five hundred as of July 12, 1912. The basis of the organization was two large German workers' singing societies, one the Arbeitersinger Bund, and the other a combination singing and sick benefits insurance society (one of the first of its kind in the United States). Both organizations had a large Socialist Party membership. With the support of the Socialist Party (not the Socialist Labor Party), after some demurring by some of the members that it was a "bourgeois project," a Finance Committee was put in charge of construction of a new Lyceum building. Raffles, picnics, and parties were held to raise the building fund. Unable to get a mort-

gage from any Rochester bank, one was obtained from a Binghamton bank.[2] On July 13, 1912, ground was ceremoniously broken for the new building at 580 St. Paul Street, between Gorham and Lowell Streets. An afternoon parade from Hoefle's Hall, corner of St. Paul and Platt Streets, to the building site was held, and addresses were given by Professor Kendrick Shedd and (in German) by Joseph Reuter. Wrote a city newspaper:[3]

> The building will have an auditorium with a seating capacity of 1,600 where the Lyceum meetings will be held..... There will also be meeting rooms..... The club idea will be carried out with billiard and pool rooms and bowling alleys, and there will be a dining room and kitchen.....
>
> The officers of the Lyceum are: President, William Lippelt; vice-president, Albert Keholt; recording secretary, A. Novotny; financial secretary, Paul Rieman; treasurer, John Schidakovitch; bond treasurer, Gustave Nei. The Finance Committee is composed of Messrs. Nei and Schidakovitch.
>
> Plans for the building were drawn by.... John Wengender and .... Francis C. Datz. The general contractor is George Kirchner.

The building was of brick and granite, three stories high, and cost about $43,000. On Labor Day, September 2, 1912, the cornerstone was laid. Addresses were delivered by Herman Jodelbauer, editor of the Volkszeitung, and John O'Rourke, Rochester Socialist.

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[2]Personal interview, Isadore Tishler, May 3, 1952.

[3]Rochester newspaper clipping (no name), July 12, 1912. Kendrick Shedd Scrapbook Collection, Labor Lyceum building, 580 St. Paul Street, Rochester, N. Y.

William Lippelt, president of the Lyceum, laid the cornerstone. "Various records and copies of the daily newspapers will be placed in the cornerstone," it was said then.[4]

Completed in January, 1913, the Progressive Working People's Lyceum was incorporated and chartered in 1913 as an organization which gave as one of its main objectives "the teaching of scientific socialism."[5]

Socialist Party Re-orientation

In 1912 much Socialist Party energy went into the realization of the new Lyceum building. In this year the Socialist Party headquarters had been moved from Shoemaker's Hall to 27 Church Street, where two floors were occupied by the party. However, as soon as the Progressive Working People's Lyceum building was constructed, the Socialist Party made its head-

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[4]Rochester Union and Advertiser, August 29, 1912.

[5]Personal interview, Isadore Tishler, president of the Progressive Working People's Lyceum, May 8, 1952. He said that at present the Lyceum has one hundred members. It has fifteen persons on the board of directors (he is president of the board). Board members serve three years, one-third replaced annually. Membership requirements: must be a worker and politically "left." This excludes Democrats and Republicans. Chief activity: sponsoring a Labor Open Forum, conducting dances, renting the two meeting halls, and operating the restaurant and bar in the basement. Several union offices are in the building: United Brewery Workers and Coal and Coke Workers. An unused library is housed there at present.

quarters there, where it remained until 1919.[6]

As early as September 17, 1911, however, a Young People's Socialist League was organized in Rochester enlisting members from the age of sixteen and upward. Records reveal that as of May, 1913 the Young People's Socialist League had five hundred members. The peak membership of 450 men and 160 women was reached at one point after this during the 1913-1915 period.[7] A state Young People's Socialist League was organized in August, 1913, and John Hughes of Rochester was made state secretary. The national Young People's Socialist League was in the process of being organized in 1913.

At the same time another organization was created which showed an amazing growth and departure in Socialist methods. On November 22, 1911, Kendrick Shedd had informed a Rochester Evening Times reporter that a Socialist Sunday School, which had been organized by the Socialist Party, had, within a year, increased from fifty-two to 225 members. This, of course, could only have added fuel to the fire of the Auburn "flag" speech which he had made. Nevertheless, the fact remained

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[6]Ibid.

[7]Kendrick Shedd Scrapbooks, Labor Lyceum, 580 St. Paul Street, period 1911-1915.

that the Socialist Party had in 1910 deliberately set itself the task of teaching socialism to young people on Sunday mornings in lieu of orthodox religion. At its peak the Socialist Sunday School, housed like the Young People's Socialist League in the Labor Lyceum building, had five hundred to six hundred members in the period from 1913-1916.

When Kendrick Shedd left the University of Rochester, he was hired by the Socialist Party in November, 1912, as a paid director of activities of the Young People's Socialist League and the Socialist Sunday School. An expansion of their program followed. The Sunday School was organized into classes, and from 1913 to 1917 the Socialist Sunday School classes met at the Labor Lyceum on Sunday morning, the Young People's Socialist League in the afternoon, and the Socialist Party at night. As revealed by his national correspondence, Shedd was promoting the idea of a Sunday School system for the Socialist Party on a national basis. Shedd said he was greatly assisted in this work at the Lyceum by Isadore Tishler and John Smith, fellow Socialists. When Shedd left Rochester in 1915 to take a job as the director of three Socialist Sunday Schools in Milwaukee (offered to him through Oscar Ammeringer, prominent Milwaukee

Socialist), he was succeeded by Isadore Fishler. Fishler was director from 1915 to 1916, but after Shedd left Rochester a decline in membership followed, for Shedd was "a magnet for the young, well-liked, devoted to the work, and a wonderful organizer. As a young man, he had a lot of energy."[8]

An interesting feature introduced and promoted by Shedd at the Lyceum in 1913 and 1914 was the training of speakers for the party by sponsoring Prize Soap Boxing contests. He organized debating teams, and Rochester and Syracuse Socialist groups vied with each other in the 1913-1915 period. Shedd himself wrote lyrics for a socialist song book and wrote a three-act play titled "The Soap Boxer" which was dramatized at the Lyceum on June 27, 1913. He directed pageants on labor and plays there. He also taught German and French at the Lyceum. Other classes in parliamentary law, debating, and naturalization were organized. Alfred Kroeger,[9] a socialist orchestra leader, had his band play at balls given at the Lyceum. Leo Rysewyk, 1913 Socialist Party member, developed as an artist under Shedd's encouragement.

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[8]Personal interview, Isadore Fishler, May 3, 1952.

[9]Kroeger is now manager of the Progressive Working People's Lyceum.

A curious letter, dated December 2, 1912, whose motivation is not certain, was found in the massive correspondence scrapbooks compiled by Shedd at the Lyceum. It deals with a question he asked of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Herbert Weet, as to whether or not a teacher in the city schools could be a socialist. In a reply, dated December 11, 1912, Weet said that it was all right for a teacher to have any political affiliation.

The Socialist Party sponsored a meeting at Convention Hall on November 20, 1913, at which Helen Keller spoke. An autographed portrait of her is still seen at the Lyceum as a memento of her visit there. On January 23, 1914, Clarence Darrow spoke at the same place under the auspices of the party. Both times Convention Hall was packed. In May, 1914, an anti-war meeting was sponsored at which Charles Edward Russell was the speaker. Harry Laidler, organizer of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, spoke at a Young People's Socialist League meeting on May 4, 1913, at the Lyceum.

The "Pushalong"

In March of 1913 the Socialists brought forth an innovation in the form of the "Pushalong." This was a literature wagon, painted red, and having a trap-door

on the bottom which could be lifted, and through which a man could step to the ground and push the wagon along from place to place. At night it was lighted by a gas lamp. Invented by an Indianapolis lunch car proprietor, promoted by Socialist J. Harry Sager[10] in Rochester, the "Pushalong" was built by the Socialists to distribute Socialist and non-Socialist papers. With Frank Bailey, a Socialist, in charge it went around downtown Rochester and covered a regular course of streets elsewhere on regular schedule "just like a milkman."[11] It visited Kodak Park, Platt and State Streets, and other places at intervals. It was used at meetings and street corners. This Socialist Party "Pushalong" cruised the streets of Rochester for about a year.[12]

Socialist Parties--Peak and Decline

From the high level of 118,045 in national party membership reached in 1912, the Socialist Party gradually declined. From 1912 to 1918 its membership was as follows:[13]

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[10]J. Harry Sager had an auto accessories business at this time.

[11]Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, December 27, 1912.

[12]Personal interview, Isadore Fishler, May 3, 1952.

[13]Harry Laidler, op. cit., p. 591.

1913--95,957 1916--83,284
1914--93,579 1917--80,379
1915--79,374

The Rochester Socialist Party membership figures probably followed this pattern of slow decline, though it would appear that a plateau was maintained from the 1915 to 1917 period. Party strength may have had little bearing on the remarkable showing that the Socialists of Rochester made in the 1917 election. Electorally the Socialist Party nationally reached its peak in 1912 when Debs and Emil Seidel rolled up a vote of 897,011, a vote to be outdone only twice at a later date when women received the franchise and thereby doubled the vote.[14] In Rochester, electorally, the peak period for the Socialist Party was not reached until 1917.

The successes, as a result of this peak of 1912, have been listed by the Socialist Party nationally as "1,039 dues-paying members in public office, among whom were fifty-six mayors, over three hundred aldermen, some state legislators, and one congressman (Berger), first elected in 1910."[15]

Regarding the Socialist Labor Party, no member-

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[14] Information Please Almanac, 1952.

[15] Harry Laidler, op. cit., p. 588.

ship figures are available, though their electoral figures are not significantly large. In the 1912 to 1918 period they fail to present any Rochester slate of candidates and are participants only in the presidential and state slates which were made up by the party.

By 1912 the language federations were a significant part of the Rochester Socialist Party membership just as they were a part of the national membership of the party. The Germans, Jews, Poles, and Italians--in that order--were important in the composition of the membership of the party. Percentage figures are not known, however.

Rochester Socialists in Organized Labor

Prior to World War I Rochester had a large shoe industry, and the number of workers in that industry who were members of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union was relatively large. In October, 1915, Gad Martindale, one of Rochester's leading Socialists, was business agent of this union. In the Lithographers' Union, John Keith, Socialist Party member, was president of the local and Richard Kitchelt, one of the city's leading Socialists, vice-president.[16] At this time William Hilsdorf, Jr., a Socialist and lithographer, was a mem-

[16]Rochester Union and Advertiser, October 27, 1915.

ber of the local. The Brewery Workers' Union, with their large German membership, had a special affinity for the Socialist Party. Many party members were recruited from its ranks. However, in the Jewish and Polish areas of the city, in the seventh, eighth, and seventeenth wards, were to be found a goodly percentage of the clothing workers, and it is from them that the Socialist Party received its greatest support. Many of them were members of the Garment Workers' Union. When the split occurred between the Garment Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, led by Sidney Hillman in 1914, the sympathies of the Socialists among the clothing workers were toward the latter industrial type of union, but this sympathy could not be made active until a strong drive in Rochester was made (as in 1918) to organize them into the newer organization.

In 1912 the Rochester Socialists in organized labor could not have helped being interested in their champion of earlier days, Max Hayes, Cleveland Socialist, who ran against Samuel Gompers for the presidency of the American Federation of Labor. He received one-third of the total votes cast at the convention.[17]

It is not known whether or not there was any

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[17]Harry Laidler, op. cit., p. 588.

action taken by Rochester Socialists in their own unions against United States entry into World War I -- in view of the official Socialist Party anti-war resolution at St. Louis in 1917. Conversely, it is also not known if unions took any disciplinary action against any Socialist as a result of his loyalty to the party declaration.

Rochester and the Wobblies

The Industrial Workers of the World members in Rochester evidently were not numerous and not too active in Rochester, according to the evidence available. On several fronts, however, the International Workers of the World was in the national spotlight, notably at the dramatic Lawrence, Massachusetts, textile strike in 1912. Rochester "Wobblies" and Rochester and Schenectady Socialists joined forces in another strike situation in Little Falls, New York. This interesting situation had its start in October, 1912, when an Industrial Workers of the World organizer tried to organize the textile workers, most of whom were Polish and Italian, in the Little Falls mills. Socialist Mayor George R. Lunn of Schenectady and four other Socialists were arrested when they tried to hold a meeting in a park near the Phoenix Knitting Mills in Little Falls. The Sheriff charged them with riot,

which he defined as "where more than ten persons gather."[18] Twice the Mayor and his associates were arrested. The same day "Mrs. Lunn, the Mayor's wife, started to read a newspaper editorial and was escorted by Sheriff Moon from the park. Another Socialist was arrested fifteen minutes later when he began reading the Bible. A big crowd gathered, but was dispersed when the riot act was read by the Sheriff."[19] The next day two more Socialists were arrested, one for reading the Constitution, and the other for speaking in the deaf and dumb sign language.[20] The Sheriff was trying to enforce a city ordinance which required that individuals must get permission by permit to speak in public places. The Socialists and Wobblies refused to ask permission. On October 19, 1912, Doctor Algernon S. Crapsey of Rochester was arrested when he tried to speak in the public park,[21] "The Socialists nicknamed the town 'Little Russia'. Mayor Lunn blamed the mill owners, backed by big business, and the city for abro-

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[18]Rochester Union and Advertiser, October 19, 1912.

[19]Ibid., October 17, 1912.

[20]Ibid., October 18, 1912.

[21]In 1912 Algernon Crapsey became a Socialist organizer. He left the party in 1917 after the St. Louis Resolution of the party committed it to the anti-war position.

gating constitutional rights."[22] The Socialists from the two cities and the Wobblies from Rochester and from Lawrence, Massachusetts (where the strike had reached a successful conclusion) then organized a parade and issued a call for a general strike, but "few workers left the mills to join the parade"[23] of an estimated 248 persons. A meeting followed the parade. Meanwhile, more Socialists were arrested. Here was the first concrete instance of joint action of the Rochester local of Wobblies and Socialists.

Inasmuch as "Big Bill" Haywood was on the executive committee of the Socialist Party and president of the Industrial Workers of the World to 1913, there was a close association between the two groups. Most Wobblies voted for the Socialists; many were members of the Socialist Party. The two organizations parted company in 1913 over the sanctioning of the use of sabotage as a weapon. The Wobblies favored it.

In the war years, however, when Rochester was committed to war preparations, there appeared an interesting news report indicating the close surveillance of the Wobblies by the police. The chief of police of

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[22]Rochester Union and Advertiser, October 23, 1912.

[23]Ibid.

Rochester, Joseph M. Quigley,[24] reportedly asserted that

> I. W. W. activities are not allowed in Rochester.... There is no room for the I. W. W. in Rochester, and this has been impressed upon some of the members of the organization who came here and started to hold street meetings and talk against the government.
>
> We did our work quietly, but the moment any traitorous remarks were made the speaker was warned that such language would not be tolerated and they were told to get out of the city, and they went to other fields.

The police chief then told the press "that they have a small following, have been closely watched, and that they have committed few illegal acts, and that there will be no occasion for wholesale arrests such as occurred in New York." Then he added: "Treason should not be tolerated in any city."[25]

Beyond these fragmentary bits of knowledge regarding the most radical of the radical groups in the United States little else is known of their Rochester activities.

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[24] Ibid., September 27, 1917.

[25] This was indeed cordial treatment as compared to the raids and mass arrests of Wobblies in Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Lincoln, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, Seattle, Duluth, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Omaha, Fresno, Tulsa, Superior, Miami, and Portland, Oregon. Away from the larger cities the Wobblies received rough physical treatment during the war, also.

Jewish Workmen's Circle Building and Branches of the Socialist Party

Except for the German element in the Socialist Party, the most numerous group was the Jewish, and most of them were members of the Jewish Workmen's Circle. The majority of these people, also, were clothing workers. The Jewish Workmen's Circle was a national organization with branches all over the country,[26] one of which was the Rochester branch. The Rochester branch was sub-divided into six branches in the city, and had a total membership of about eight hundred. In 1912 plans were made by the Rochester branch for a building costing from $18,000 to $20,000 at 594 Joseph Avenue (corner of Joseph Avenue and Morris Street), where a lot had already been purchased. The Workmen's Circle Progressive Library Lyceum had been organized, the officers of which were: Louis Lebowitz, chairman; Samuel Kravetz, vice-chairman; H. Cohn, treasurer; J. Jerelick, recording secretary; and M. Seitzer, financial secretary. The trustees applied for a charter. The Lady's Auxiliary (Branch 27) of the Workmen's Circle also helped to promote the building. It had as

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[26]James Brewer, op. cit., p. 434. He estimates that in 1934 it had 85,000 members nationally and 640 in Rochester.

one of its objectives: "To help foreigners and young men for good citizenship."[27]

The building, as planned, was to have a library, an assembly hall seating from five hundred to six hundred on the second floor, and a smaller assembly hall on the first floor. Lectures and educational programs were envisioned, and chess and other amusements were to be provided. It is likely that the People's Progressive Labor Lyceum, started this year chiefly by the German branch of the party, influenced the erection of this Jewish center wherein the Jewish branch of the Socialist Party hereafter was to have its headquarters, meetings, and rallies. The building was completed in 1913. Prior to this the Jewish Workmen's Circle was housed at the corner of Joseph Avenue and Sullivan Streets.[28]

It is not indicated where the Italian and Polish branches of the Socialist Party held their meetings before the Labor Lyceum on St. Paul Street was completed in January of 1913. It was not until 1921 that a two-story building known as the Polish People's Home was erected in the seventeenth ward, a Socialist

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[27]Democrat and Chronicle, December 23, 1912.

[28]Personal interview, Isadore Tishler, May 3, 1952.

stronghold, and became then the headquarters of the Polish branch of the Socialist Party.[29]

World War I and the Rochester Socialists

"A Socialist could hardly open his mouth in Rochester without being called a traitor," "said one prominent Socialist who later served overseas in World War I.[30] This was the situation even as early as 1915 and 1916, Rochester Socialists report. The first position of the Socialists was to hold anti-war meetings and rallies, and these were held as early as May, 1914. When the first shock of war hit the Socialists, and they began to see that the international socialist movement had been buried under the weight of nationalism, some disillusionment came. German, Belgian, French, and British Socialists were supporting the war, they soon learned. The American Socialists took up the cry of neutrality, impartiality, and peace and branded the war as imperialistic. Some, such as Richard Kitchelt, succumbed to Wilson's peace program in 1916, however, and left the party before the United States entered the war. J. P. Morgan and the munition

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[29]James Brewer, op. cit., pp. 434-435.

[30]Personal interview, William Hilsdorf, Jr., June 2, 1952. From 1914 to 1917 he was financial secretary of the party.

interests came in for Socialist censure. The restraints of the war, however, were tightened up on Socialists when the Espionage Act of June 15, 1915 was passed by Congress and the drive on Socialists and Socialist publications began. A counter-weight was tried by the Socialist Party, however, when in its national convention in 1915, it passed an anti-preparedness resolution[31] "Any members of the Socialist Party, elected to office, who shall in any way vote to appropriate moneys for military or naval purposes or war, shall be expelled from the party." Some Socialists joined various peace organizations, among them being the Fellowship of Reconciliation (Rauschenbusch became a member), the War Resister's League, and the People's Council of America For Peace and Democracy (this last reportedly had two million members).

For more than two years the Socialists had the time to think of what they would do in the event of American entry into the war. When war was declared on April 6, 1917, the Socialist Party convention meeting in St. Louis passed by a vote of 140 out of 176 this resolution:

> .....reaffirms its allegiance to the principles of internationalism and working-class

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[31] Travers Clement and Lillian Symes, Rebel America, p. 286.

> solidarity the world over....proclaims its unalterable opposition to the war just declared..... As against the false doctrine of national patriotism we uphold the ideal of international working-class solidarity.... the declaration of war a crime against the people of the United States and against the nations of the world. In all modern history there has been no war more unjustifiable than the war in which we are about to engage.....

It also said that the party would be pledged to "continuous, active, and public opposition to war....opposition to....legislation for military or industrial conscription,....constant propaganda against military training, ...widespread....propaganda....as to the true relation between capitalism and war."[32] A referendum vote of the party membership gave to this resolution nearly unanimous backing, the vote being twenty-one thousand to three hundred and fifty opposed.[33] Rochester's approximately nine hundred members shared in this approval.

If some Rochester Socialists left the party as a result of the stand taken by the party on the war, they had a lot of company among the intellectuals of the party. Some of these were: Upton Sinclair, John Spargo, Charles Edward Russell, Allan Benson, W. R. Gaylord, J. G. Phelps Stokes, and Kendrick Shedd.

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[32] Ibid., pp. 293-296.

[33] Ibid.

However, the party did not suffer a drastic reduction in numbers as one might expect. There was hardly an appreciable difference nationally (there were losses in rural areas and gains in the cities) and evidently none in Rochester. Moreover, in Rochester in 1917 the Socialists rolled up the largest vote in their history. Eugene Debs supported the St. Louis resolution, though he was not present when it was passed. Morris Hillquit was leader of the group that wrote and supported the resolution.

To implement the St. Louis resolution in Rochester, most activity was evidently on the electoral level. There was passive resistance to buying of bonds among the Socialists. In a story of Morris Hillquit's campaign for mayor of New York on a peace platform, twelve thousand in Madison Square Garden cheered Frank Sieverman, fiery Rochester Socialist, who was a candidate for controller, when he said: "They may choke to death any number of Socialist publications, but they can't stifle the yearning for peace."[34] On September 27, 1917, a grand jury of the United States District Court in Rochester "returned an indictment against an Abraham Endzuck, an alleged Socialist, who is said to

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[34]Rochester Union and Advertiser, September 24, 1917.

have distributed circulars of a treasonable nature in the streets of Rochester."[35] Naturally the German branch of the party underwent a thoroughgoing criticism in this period, for it was particularly vulnerable. Professor Ewald Eiserhardt, professor of German literature at the University of Rochester, had to resign his position in 1918 due to Rochester war hysteria which focused upon him simply because he was German. To the credit of Rush Rhees and the University of Rochester, he was reinstated, however, after the war was over. Eiserhardt was not associated with the Socialists of Rochester.

Why the Socialist Party office was not raided in the war, when practically all the rest of the cities in the country had their Industrial Workers of the World and Socialist Party offices raided by United States marshals, is a mystery. However, the district attorney of Rochester, according to William Pidgeon, Jr., had on his desk the names of many Rochester Socialists (William Pidgeon's among them) who were to be watched closely during the period of American partici-

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[35] Ibid., September 27, 1917. If Endzuck was a Rochester Socialist, he does not appear to be known by some of the Socialists now living who were party members then.

pation in the war.[36] The Rochester branch of the party evidently was under close scrutiny and surveillance. Socialist newspapers were suppressed in many parts of the country: The Milwaukee Leader, the Rip-Saw of St. Louis, the Masses of New York, and others. Numerous Socialists were being arrested, even national party officials. Emma Goldman was tried and convicted of obstructing the draft. In brief, the Socialist Party, Socialist Labor Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, and the anarchists opposed the war and were persecuted by both legal and self-constituted authorities during the war period.

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[36]Personal interview, William Pidgeon, Jr., April 21, 1952. Pidgeon felt that he and others faced the possibility of deportation. He states that he learned of this matter after the war was over in a personal conversation with the district attorney.

CHAPTER VII

ELECTIONS OF 1912 TO 1917, INCLUSIVE

Though the Socialist Party strength in membership may have remained on a plateau in Rochester from about 1912 to 1917, it was not so electorally. From a 1912 figure of 2,400 to 2,600 votes garnered for the major offices, the Socialist vote rose in the 1913 election to 2,900. This was a new peak reached in Rochester from the party's inception in 1901 and in its steady upward climb. After this 1913 crest was reached there was a slow but steady recession in voting power through the 1914, 1915, and 1916 elections. Then, in 1917, occurred the sharpest rise in electoral strength of the Rochester Socialist Party in its history, a rise far above the 1913 peak and more than double the 1913 vote figure.

The Socialist Labor Party electorally almost passes out of existence in the period from 1912 to 1917. Its candidate for governor in 1914 got only thirty-nine votes in Rochester, while its presidential candidate in 1912 got 218 votes, and 123 votes in 1916. No municipal ticket was placed in the field by the party, and after the 1914 election no state ticket was

entertained either. Henceforth their electoral activity was confined to presidential elections.

In analyzing the election of 1912, in which Debs and Emil Seidel, Milwaukee Mayor, were the presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the party, it is noteworthy that Debs and Seidel rolled up a new high for the Socialist Party with 897,011 votes. The Socialist Party platform this year had these planks among others:[1]

1. women's suffrage
2. abolition of the Senate and the veto power of the President
3. direct election of President and Vice-President
4. abolition of Supreme Court power to declare a law unconstitutional
5. curbing powers of the courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes
6. abolition of child labor under sixteen
7. establish minimum wage scales
8. establish non-contributory old age pensions, unemployment insurance, accident and sickness insurance
9. collective ownership and democratic management of utilities, natural resources, and land where practicable

A part of this platform Socialists were accusing the new Roosevelt-led Progressive Party of stealing outright.[2]

An important disaffection occurred in the Socialist Party, also, when Haywood's speech at Cooper Union

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[1]Morris Hillquit, Socialism Summed Up, p. 72.

[2]Ibid.

this year in which he advocated the use of sabotage, was made an intra-party issue. In 1913, when Haywood was expelled from the Executive Committee by the Socialist Party, Haywood and the militant Wobblies were alienated from the party.

Prior to the 1912 election the Rochester local of the party held a fair sponsored by the women of the party at their headquarters at 27 Church Street. Along with the fair in the auditorium upstairs there was dancing and card playing on the lower floor.[3]

Out of the forty-five Socialist Party presidential electors only two, Joel Moses and John L. Schmidt, were from Rochester. There were eight Socialist Labor Party electors from Rochester: Charles Ruby, Morris Schreiber, George Fisher, Alvin Sousa, Anthony Houtenbrink, John Withers, Robert Wetzel, and Berthold Bauml.[4] Debs got 2,600 votes in Rochester, while Roosevelt received 11,126 as compared with Wilson's 13,437 and Taft's 12,246.[5] Only the cigar maker, Carl A. Luedecke, 108 Lowell Street, Rochester, was on the Socialist

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[3]Rochester Union and Advertiser, October 7, 1912.

[4]Berthold Bauml was a clothing worker who lived at 176 Maple Street.

[5]Rochester Union and Advertiser, November 6, 1912. This was the first time a Democrat won the city and county since the Civil War.

Labor Party's state ticket as candidate for Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals.

Notable candidates on the Socialist Party ticket of 1912 were:

Charles Edward Russell	Governor
Gustave Strebel	Lieutenant-Governor
Kendrick Shedd	Representative in Congress (thirty-eighth district)
John E. O'Rourke	Representative in Congress (thirty-ninth district)
John Schidakowitz	Senator - forty-fifth district
Joel Mosey	Senator - forty-sixth district
William Lippelt	Assemblyman - second district
George Weber	Assemblyman - fifth district
William Pidgeon, Jr.	Special County Judge
Carl H. Caspar	Surrogate

Gustave Strebel was a clothing worker from Syracuse. John Schidakowitz, an optician, was one of the promoters of the Progressive Working People's Lyceum this year and, in 1917, was to be one of the elected Socialist supervisors. Carl H. Caspar was a clothing worker. Though there was a distinct gain for the party in this year as a whole, the Socialist candidates in Rochester in no way threatened the other three parties for supremacy. The Progressives ran third in the city and the Socialists fourth.

The national Socialist trend seemed askew, how-

ever, when Victor Berger and most of the other Milwaukee Socialists were defeated in this election, while the complete Socialist ticket in Schenectady was beaten, also. Despite this, however, the Socialists had shown real strength in staving off inroads and opposing as well as they did the three major presidential candidates in this election.

Featuring the 1913 election in Rochester and New York state was the alliance and trading between the Democrats and Progressives in which many Progressives endorsed Democrats, called Fusionists, to stave off a Republican victory. This maneuver hampered the Socialists and reduced their expected voting results. Prior to the election a City Club debate between Republican William Webb, Progressive George S. Van Schaick, and Socialist Edwin A. Rumball at the Powers Hotel was of interest. Rumball stressed the point that the Socialist Party wanted to elect "principles," not men. He attributed an estimated fifteen percent of the voters coming out to vote in 1912 to "the small significance which a vote for the other parties had to fundamentally change things."[6]

The 1913 election for city and state offices

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[6]Rochester Union and Advertiser, November 1, 1913.

was preceded by one of the most intense campaigns of the Rochester local of the Socialist Party in its history. The campaign was directed from the new headquarters on St. Paul Street. The results showed an increase over the previous year of about three hundred votes, reaching electorally the acme of the party's voting power by garnering between 2,800 to 3,000 votes for the major offices of the city. Spearheaded by the highly effective platform speaker George Weber, candidate for mayor, and J. Harry Sager, who introduced the "Pushalong" to Rochester this year, and who was candidate for President of the Common Council, the Socialist Party waged one of its most effective and best organized campaigns.

Besides these men, however, other noteworthy candidates in this election were:

John Schidakowitz----Alderman, seventeenth ward
Carl Caspar----------County Purchasing Agent
William Hilsdorf, Sr.Assemblyman, fifth district
William Pidgeon, Jr.-Assemblyman, fourth district
Jonrad Morris--------Comptroller
Martin A. Rothmund---Treasurer
Kendrick Shedd-------School Commissioner
William Pidgeon, Sr.-Alderman, first ward
Joel Moses-----------Alderman, fourteenth ward
John O'Rourke--------Alderman, nineteenth ward

Of the Socialist Party candidates Kendrick Shedd, candi-

date for School Commissioner, led his party with 2,976 votes. Weber received 2,902 votes. Shedd was opposing in this fight Helen E. Gregory, Republican, lone member of the Board of Directors out of five who had not exonerated him in the Number 9 School social center "flag" speech fight, and James P. B. Duffy, another member of that particular board who had exonerated him. Notable, also, in this election is the William Pidgeon father and son team on the Socialist slate. Since the two major parties were able to roll up votes from 18,000 to 21,000, however, the Socialist vote was not yet an overshadowing menace to their position. Absent, incidentally, in this election was a Socialist Labor Party city or state ticket of candidates.

The Socialists in 1914 felt the impact of World War I, and it influenced the nature of the campaign and the election results. Sharing in this impact on the Socialists was the dramatized hearings by the United States Commission on Industrial Relations, headed by Frank P. Walsh, which was investigating the Ludlow, Colorado, "massacre" and hearing testimony from J. P. Morgan, Haywood, Gompers, Rockefeller, and others. Debs resigned in 1913 as a writer for the Appeal to Reason and was writing anti-war articles for Kate Richard O'Hare's National Rip-Saw in St. Louis, which

was suppressed during the war. The leader of the Socialist Labor Party, Daniel De Leon, died this year, and his party was further weakened.

The Rochester Socialists sponsored Clarence Darrow's meeting at Convention Hall in January of 1914. A pre-election anti-war meeting sponsored by the party on October 23, 1914, featured the Socialists Charles Edward Russell, candidate for United States Senator and recently home from Europe, and former Mayor George R. Lunn of Schenectady. There was a large audience. Russell, who later backed the United States war effort, said the main issue was "whether the world was to have a continuation of war or peace."[7] Only by changing the system, he said, could peace be maintained. He prophesied that, if the old system remained at the end of the war, there would be only an armed truce and that "in a few years there would be another World War involving this country." Continuing, he said:

> Every ballot cast for Socialism is a protest against war and a safeguard to humanity... Hell is paved with the fragments of peace treaties.....
>
> Competition for commercial supremacy, that is the cause of the war. In the struggle for so-called commercial supremacy nations have reached out for markets for surplus products even at the point of the bayonet. Why did they have surplus products? Because they who produced were not paid enough to buy them back.

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[7]Rochester Union and Advertiser, October 24, 1914.

Under the cloud of the war the Socialists in Rochester suffered a decline in this election of 1914 from the 1913 electoral peak. The Socialist vote dropped to a level below nineteen hundred votes for the major state, county, and legislative offices. Gustave Strebel of Syracuse, popular in Rochester as a speaker, was Socialist candidate for governor this year. Mrs. Florence Cross Kitchelt of Rochester, wife of the Socialist vice-president of the Lithographers' Union, an active suffragist and prominent settlement worker, was Socialist candidate for Secretary of State. Other noteworthy Socialist Party candidates in the 1914 election included:

William Pidgeon, Jr.--Assemblyman, fourth district
Charles R. Bach--------Representative to Congress, thirty-eighth district
John R. O'Rourke-------Representative to Congress, thirty-ninth district
Isabel C. Darrow-------State Senator, forty-fifth district
Kendrick Shedd---------State Senator, forty-sixth district
John Keith-------------Assemblyman, first district
George Weber-----------Assemblyman, fifth district
Frank Bailey-----------Sheriff
J. Harry Sager---------County Treasurer
Martin Rothmund--------City Purchasing Agent
Louis B. Boudin--------Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals

Charles Bach was a buttonmaker and active party member since the party's inception. Isabel Darrow takes her

place as one of the party's most faithful women supporters, joining the fairly numerous group of women to whom the Socialists gave positions on their slates. This election was the last in which Kendrick Shedd participated, for he left for Milwaukee as director of the Socialist Sunday Schools there in 1915 (a job which he held for three years). The candidacy of John Keith came at a time when he was President of the Lithographers' Union in Rochester. And Frank Bailey was the erstwhile propeller of the "Pushalong" when it was in operation in 1913 and 1914.

The Socialist Labor Party had only a state slate of candidates this year, and Anthony Houtenbrink, 102 Weyl Street, Rochester, candidate for state treasurer, was the only Rochester representative. He got forty-two votes in Rochester.

As there was a state constitutional convention called, contests for delegates by the various parties took place. In the forty-fifth district the Socialists supported the candidacy of James Sullivan, Julius C. Levi, and Charles R. Bach. In the forty-sixth district John E. O'Rourke, Joseph Reuter, and Warren Atkinson ran as candidates for delegates. For delegates-at-large Socialist Party candidates included: Julius C. Levi, Charles R. Bach, John E. O'Rourke,

Joseph Reuter, and Warren Atkinson. Of this group this was the first time that Warren Atkinson, 182 Fulton Avenue, Rochester, teacher of electricity at Edison Technical High School, entered his name as a candidate for office on the Socialist Party ticket.

The results of the election showed that the Progressive Party had declined in New York below the Socialist Party in electoral power. The return of the Progressives to the Republican Party fold took place. Meyer London was elected by the Socialists for representative to Congress from New York City. Victor Berger and Gaylard were narrowly defeated in Wisconsin. It was a Republican landslide in Rochester in 1914.

Under the increased stress and strain of the war in 1915 the Socialist Party of Rochester receded even further in its decline from the 1913 electoral peak. Very few Socialists were as outspoken as Debs when he wrote in the Appeal to Reason for September 11, 1915, on the topic "When I Shall Fight",[8]

> ....I shall not fight for the regular army of the plutocracy..... I am opposed to every war.....except the world-wide revolution. In that war I am prepared to fight in any way the ruling class may make necessary, even to the barricades.

However, a full slate was put into the field by the

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[8]Floy R. Painter, That Man Debs, p. 112.

Rochester local of the Socialist Party on election day for all city and county offices, whereas no slate was presented by the Socialist Labor Party. For Mayor the Socialists ran the minister of the North Baptist Church, Herbert A. Lotee, 816 Conkey Avenue, who had been a student under Rauschenbusch at the Rochester Theological Seminary and a student at the University of Rochester.[9] Charles J. McKelvey,[10] 195 Michigan Street, was selected as the candidate for President of the Common Council. However, for none of the major city offices did any Socialist receive even 1,800 votes, a further decline from the preceding year's approximately 1,900 votes. Reverend Herbert Lotee received 1,462 votes, McKelvey 1,503, and Louis Reynolds, treasurer candidate, 1,525. Among other candidates put forward by the party were the following:

William H. Hilsdorf	County Clerk
Richard Kitchelt	Superintendent of the Poor
John Keith	Assemblyman, first district
James Sullivan	Assemblyman, second district
George Weber	Assemblyman, fifth district
Frank Werner	Comptroller

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[9]Rochester City Directories, 1900 to 1912.

[10]No relation to the present city historian, Blake McKelvey.

John Schidakowitz-----Alderman, seventeenth ward
Frank Bailey----------Judge of Municipal Court
Joel Moses------------Commissioner of Schools
Jacob J. Levin--------Supervisor, eighth ward
William Pidgeon, Jr.--Supervisor, tenth ward
James Oakes-----------Constable, tenth ward
William Hammen--------Constable, nineteenth ward
John L. Schmidt-------Alderman, nineteenth ward

At this time William Hilsdorf, Jr. was financial secretary of the party. Jacob J. Levin, 71 Vienna Street, was a young clothing worker who was to succeed in the election of 1917 where he lost as a candidate for supervisor of the eighth ward in this election. The veteran Socialist, James Oakes, 551 Lexington Avenue, was to support the Socialist candidates in many a later election.[11] One of the many Socialist man-and-wife teams is brought to mind by the candidacy of William Hammen of the nineteenth ward. Both were active Socialists for many years.

The 1915 election was notable also in that it resulted in the decisive defeat of the new state constitution backed by Elihu Root and of women's suffrage. Women's suffrage was strongly supported by the Social-

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[11] James Oakes now lives at 134 Wimbledon Road, Rochester, 5, New York.

ists, but it was defeated in the city by about 4,700 votes and in the state by over 200,000 votes.[12] However, women's participation in political affairs among the Socialists was long achieved before women's suffrage. And again in 1915 the Republicans won the county and city by a landslide.

Against the titanic pressures of preparedness and pro-war sentiment the Socialist Party nationally and in Rochester in 1916 could hardly hope to prevail. Again, in Rochester, it lost ground. Nationally the Socialist Party presidential candidate, Allan Benson, a writer, and vice-presidential candidate, George R. Kirkpatrick, lecturer and former professor, were able to garner 585,113 votes, a decrease from 1912 of over 500,000. They had to contend with two outstanding liberal candidates of the two major parties, Woodrow Wilson and Charles Hughes, both of whom were titans as presidential candidates and had superlative records. The much loved and admired Debs later said of this year's election:[13]

> Having had almost a million votes cast for me in the latter campaign (1912) and as many

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[12]Rochester Union and Advertiser, November 5, 1915.

[13]Eugene Debs, Walls and Bars, p. 100.

> more that were not counted, and feeling that I had been more than sufficiently honored, I concluded not to be a presidential candidate again, and in the national political contest of 1916 I did not permit the use of my name in the nominations.

By a referendum vote the party arrived at its nominees this year instead of through the convention process. Despite the record made by the Democrats while in office, the Socialists were optimistic in view of the close votes in numerous towns, cities, and districts where in 1914 they had lost. Organized labor led by Gompers backed Wilson in view of his support of the Adamson (eight-hour) Act and other legislation. But the cry of "Wilson kept us out of war" was potent, too.

In Rochester Richard Kitchelt, long important in Socialism and labor, was expelled from the Socialist Party this year, for he was won over by Wilson's record and "came out openly in his support."[14] In behalf of the Democratic Party, Kitchelt was holding noonday meetings at various places such as the Rochester Stamping Company, Symington plants, and Lincoln Park. This was only one example of the defection of liberals and radicals who before 1916 had supported the Socialists.

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[14]Rochester Union and Advertiser, November 8, 1916.

In view of these factors, therefore, the Rochester Socialist Party suffered its greatest decrease since 1912 in this election. The party's candidates for president and vice-president in the city got only 1,303 votes. Algernon Lee, gubernatorial candidate, educational director of the Socialist Rand School of Social Science, got only 1,382 votes. The United States senatorial candidate, Joseph D. Cannon, did little better with 1,574 votes. Other major party candidates also got from 1,200 to 1,600 votes. The Socialist Labor Party candidates for the major offices this year only got from 120 to 150 votes.

The Socialist Party also put forward the following partial list of candidates for state, county, and city offices on its slate:

William Hilsdorf, Sr.	Senator, forty-sixth district
William Richards	Justice of the Supreme Court
Charles Swaim	Representative in Congress, twenty-eighth district
William H. Hilsdorf	Representative in Congress, thirty-ninth district
Hazel C. Darrow	Senator, forty-fifth district
Charles Bach	Assemblyman, first district
George A. Stanley	Assemblyman, second district
William Pidgeon, Jr.	Assemblyman, third district
George Weber	Assemblyman, fifth district

William Richards was the sole Rochester Socialist representative on the state ticket this year, though William Hilsdorf and Joel Moses were among the list of presidential electors chosen by the Socialist Party in New York state. Charles Swain was a frequent speaker at the new Progressive Working People's Lyceum building meetings in the 1913 to 1916 period. The candidacy of George H. Stahley, 11 Boston Street, Rochester, a clothing worker, is significant, for the next year, running for alderman in the seventeenth ward, he was to be a winning candidate whereas this year he lost. Weber's year-to-year candidacy was to reach in 1917 its greatest recognition when, for the second time, he ran for mayor. As the two major parties gained votes from fifteen thousand to thirty thousand for their candidates in Rochester this year, there was no indication that the Socialists could or would offer any challenge to them in the next election. Every ward in the city was carried by the Republicans.

Regarding the Socialist Labor Party in the 1916 election, Carl A. Luedecke, perennial Rochester candidate on their slate, was the only elector listed from Rochester. Among the candidates on the state slate of the party was Anthony Houtenbrink, candidate for comptroller.

Nationally, Meyer London was re-elected to Congress in 1916 and Daniel W. Hoan was elected this year in Milwaukee as its Mayor. He was to stay in this office until 1938.[15]

In some ways the election of 1917 was the most momentous in the history of Rochester Socialism. When war was declared by the United States in April of 1917, the party (however unwise it may be considered) made the most courageous decision of its life when it stood athwart the American war effort. Conflict was inevitable. The party was all but dismembered as a result. The new Espionage Act as amended in 1917, along with the old treason and sedition laws, were used against individuals and the party to the end of the war. Taking the brunt, however, were the Wobblies, whose difficulties in this period make lurid story-telling. Some Rochester Socialists themselves construed the position of the party regarding the war as treason and left the party, among them being Kendrick Shedd and Algernon Crapsey. While students at the University of Rochester were being sent to army camps and digging trenches on the football field in October of 1917 as part of their military training, as compulsory mili-

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[15]Harry Laidler, Social-Economic Movements, pp. 588-591.

tary training for freshmen and sophomores was being decided at a meeting of the faculty on October 27, 1917, and as "physical training was being given up for the war in favor of military training,"[16] the Rochester Socialists were waging an intensive peace campaign in the city before the election.

To aid the hand of the Socialists came the peace proposal of Pope Benedict in September of 1917, which enlisted some Catholic support for a cessation of hostilities when the Germans and Austrians signified their acceptance of the Pope's peace proposals. Anti-war and some pro-German sentiment was to be found in concentrated form, of course, among the German-Americans of Rochester, many of whom were members of the Socialist Party. With their emphasis on an early peace, with the likelihood that there was considerable disillusionment among Rochesterians in Wilson's declaration for war after being elected on a "He kept us out of war" slogan, the Socialists of Rochester staged a surprising upset in the 1917 election.

The usual full slate of candidates of the Socialist Party was presented at election time for state, legislative, and city offices. Notable on this list

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[16]Rochester Union and Advertiser, October 29, 1917.

of candidates were:

William Hildorf, Jr.	Assemblyman, fifth district
Louis B. Boudin	Associate Judge of Appeals Court
Joel Moses	Special County Judge
Charles J. McKelvey	County treasurer
Martin Rothmund	Assemblyman, fourth district
George Weber	Mayor
Louis J. Reynolds	President of Common Council
James J. Sullivan	Comptroller
Alton T. Houser	Treasurer
J. H. Sager	School Commissioner
Myers Snyder	Constable, seventh ward
Jacob J. Levin	Supervisor, eighth ward
Charles Messinger	Alderman, eighth ward
Samuel Kurlansky	Constable, eighth ward
John Schidakowitz	Supervisor, seventeenth ward
George E. Stahley	Alderman, seventeenth ward
William Fritag	Constable, seventeenth ward.
John L. Schmidt	Alderman, nineteenth ward

The election of November 6, 1917, resulted in seven Rochester Socialist Party candidates being swept into office: Two supervisors, two aldermen, and three constables. These came from the seventh, eighth, and seventeenth wards, all of them consistently strong in Socialist Party membership. More significant, perhaps, was the tremendous vote given to the candidates for the major city offices. George Weber, candidate for mayor,

received 8,272 votes; Louis Reynolds, candidate for President of the Common Council, got 8,106 votes; Alton T. Houser, city treasurer candidate, got 8,051 votes; Frank Werner, municipal court judge candidate, got 8,104; and J. H. Sager, school commissioner candidate, 8,195. For the other offices comparable increases are noted, also.

Both the Republicans and Democrats experienced a reduction of several thousand votes in this election over the previous year's total, and the Socialist Party was evidently the beneficiary. The Republican Party in Rochester still maintained, however, a large lead in votes for the major offices of the city, for in the mayoralty race, for example, Hiram Edgerton nosed out George Weber by 24,171 to 8,272 votes. Significant, however, is the fact that the Socialist Party came within several hundred votes of replacing the Democratic Party as the second party in the city. Also significant is the fact that William A. Buckley, Democratic candidate for mayor, supported municipal ownership of city lighting and transportation.—"If I am elected, it will be done," he said.[17] Both Democrats and Socialists had votes in the eight thousand to nine

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[17]Rochester Union and Advertiser, September 25, 1917.

thousand range. The Republicans won every ward except the eighth and seventeenth, which were won by the Socialists led by Weber. In the fifth and seventh wards the Socialists beat the Democrats.

The Socialist Party victors in this 1917 election were: Myers Snyder, 204 Joseph Avenue, constable, seventh ward; Jacob J. Levin, 264 Baden Street, supervisor, eighth ward; Charles Messinger, 45 Catherine Street, alderman, eighth ward; Samuel Kurlansky, 54 Hoeltzer Street, constable, eighth ward; John Schidakowitz, 17 Troyer Street, supervisor, seventeenth ward; George A. Stahley, 11 Boston Street, alderman, seventeenth ward; and William Fritag, 26 Eiffel Place, constable, seventeenth ward.

The youngest of the group, Jacob J. Levin, was spare-looking, small in stature, had dark hair, and was a Jewish tailor.[18] Charles Messinger,[19] twine and paper bag storekeeper, bald and with a moustache, was German. George Stahley, clean shaven and with large eyes, was a clothing worker. John Schidakowitz was a

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[18]Jacob Levin, 556 Harvard Street, Rochester, is at present general manager of the Royal Uniform Corporation, 83 East Main Street, Rochester.

[19]Charles Messinger's twine and paper bag store is still located at the corner of Central Avenue and North Plymouth Avenue.

Lithuanian optician, elderly, with moustache and brown hair. Samuel Kurlansky was Polish.

The reaction of the press and of the Socialists themselves to this surprising election result is interesting. Said the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle of November 7, 1917:

> This is the first time that the Socialists have had a representative in the city's legislative body, and much curiosity was expressed last night as to their course of action. It was a matter of general regret that Alderman Weber and Thiem were not returned.
>
> .....at the Labor Lyceum there was a celebration that rivaled in enthusiasm any ever held by a political party in this city..... Jews were cheering wildly....for Jacob Levin...; the Poles were making known the qualifications of Samuel Kurlansky, constable-elect; the Lithuanians did honor to John Schidakowitz; and the German-speaking Socialists were joined with others in singing the praises of George A. Stahley,....Charles Messinger, William Fritag, and Myers Snyder.....

Stahley led a band from the seventeenth ward to the Labor Lyceum. Another band showed up later. The Rochester Union and Advertiser editorialized on November 8, 1917, as follows:

> There is only one explanation for the large Socialist vote cast in Rochester and in other cities of the U. S. on Tuesday: It was a protest against the war made by the pacifists, pro-Germans, and disloyal Americans. The size of this un-American element in Rochester..... is a very disagreeable surprise, for most people had thought that Rochester was as relatively free from disloyal persons as it is from other undesirable elements. The vote shows that there is lurking and skulking in a city as clean and loyal as Rochester an enemy

> element sufficiently large and well organized to make itself a real power to be reckoned with by the community.
>
> The Socialist Party was the only party in the field that offered the slightest attraction to disloyal Americans, for it was the party that was brazenly un-American, while all other parties were trying to outdo each other in expressions of patriotism..... This organized enemy may cause trouble..... We must guard against the menace by united, patriotic action.

The same paper in the same issue printed a picture of Messinger, Stahley, Levin, and Schidakowitz. Beneath the picture the newspaper declared that "Credit for the carrying of the suffrage amendment is declared by Socialists to be due largely to their agitation for labor reform and support of the suffrage movement."

For November 9, 1917, a special meeting was called of the Rochester local of the Socialist Party at which an advisory committee organized to consult with and advise the elected representatives of the party.[20] On this committee were Joel Moses, George Weber, Warren Atkinson, and others.

Women's suffrage lost in the election of 1917 in Rochester by a vote of 15,985 to 13,392, though it won in New York state by a majority of over ninety thousand votes. Socialists claimed some credit for this. In New York City Morris Hillquit ran on a peace

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[20]Rochester Union and Advertiser, November 8, 1917.

platform for mayor and received a vote of 138,793, which was three times greater than any previous Socialist vote there. Among the seven Socialist Alderman and ten Socialist assemblymen from New York City elected this year were; Benjamin Gitlow, Louis Waldman, labor lawyer, and Elmer Rosenberg, vice-president of the Garment Workers' Union. Reverend George R. Lunn of Schenectady left the Socialist Party this year and supported the Democrats, with the result that the Socialists of Schenectady were defeated by the Republicans. Said the Democrat and Chronicle regarding Hillquit's race in New York: "Hillquit's election would have fully justified hanging out all the flags in Berlin."[21]

One of the Socialist Party officials[22] in Rochester in 1917 had this explanation for the victory in the seventeenth ward. He said that there was a Catholic priest in this ward who was all afire with regard to an immediate peace and urged his parishoners, most of whom were Polish, to vote Socialist as a protest vote. The Socialists were campaigning on an early peace platform, the seventeenth ward was largely Polish in composition, and the Polish branch of the

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[21]Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, November 8, 1917.

[22]Personal interview, William Hilsdorf, Jr., June 2, 1952.

Socialist Party was very active.

What did the Socialist Party representatives do when they got into office? Apparently little. The nickname "milk Socialists" was given to them when, considering the duplication and waste involved in the current milk distribution system, they proposed the municipal distribution of milk in Rochester. The Socialist, J. H. Sager, was one of the enthusiasts who backed this proposal, and the Rochester Times-Union's support was enlisted for the project through a Doctor Williams, who became interested. But nothing came of the proposal.[23]

It was also reported that the Times Union at this time was negotiating with the Socialist Party for the exclusive use of Socialist Party news.[24] The party had under serious consideration at this time, also, the publication of its own newspaper, but this, too, was abandoned.

The Russian Revolution

When Trotsky and Hillquit, in a New York casino on March 4, 1917, argued over the way in which the New

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[23]Personal interview, Warren Atkinson, 72 Radcliffe Road, Irondequoit, New York, July 1, 1952.

[24]Ibid.

York Socialists were to instruct their delegates regarding the war at the impending St. Louis convention of the Socialist Party, revolutionary and parliamentary socialism were clearly represented. This split at this time, enlarged by the Russian Revolution later in the year, brought forth the key question and problem for the individual Socialist from the early part of 1917 onward.

Rochester Socialists heard the news of the Russian Revolution with pleasure and delight. At last a workers' democracy was being built, it was thought. The high idealism of the revolution's first acts, such as the abolition of capital punishment, the creation of a workers' parliament, and the establishment of women's equality, gave them great hope. The model for the world to follow was being put together piece by piece--such was the impression. The doctrinaire Socialist had his prophecy fulfilled in 1917. The Christian Socialist, by the very act of a physical revolution, was left out in the cold, moral wilderness. Not yet seen in these early days as the revolution dawned on the world in all its significance were the cruelties, rank materialism, and the amorality which shortly were to follow. Not seen yet was the soon recognizable fact that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" was really a "dictatorship over the proletariat."

Nevertheless, in 1917 a psychological change in the party took place which led to the division of the party, though officially this division only took place in 1919. The happier, idealistic, moral spirit gave way to a more vindictive, revolutionary spirit, the spirit of "any means to the end." In Rochester the elements that took up this new revolutionary spirit broke away from the Socialist Party, which embraced the more conservative advocates of evolutionary and parliamentary change, and formed a branch of the Proletarian Party. This more radical Socialist group was able to seize control of the Progressive Working People's Lyceum in 1919, and the Socialist Party had to seek new headquarters.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In tracing the main outlines of socialism in Rochester for the years 1900 to 1917, the rise and decline of the Socialist Labor Party and the development of the Socialist Party to its peak year in 1917 has been described. The lesser activity and influence of the Wobblies and the anarchists in Rochester had been noted. From year to year the socialist groups, with more moderate reformers of every description, pressed for reforms and eradication of numerous evils of the day. Through demands for immediate reforms and doctrinaire proposals the socialists expressed their chief concerns.

The machinery which they constructed to achieve their goals-- party organizations, headquarters, and methods of propagating the faith-- has been outlined. Some of their leaders were outstanding men, such as Rauschenbusch, Crapsey, Brown, and others. But whether the personalities were great or small, the total membership of the socialist groups in Rochester represented a significant protest and reform movement.

It is not possible to think of Rochester Socialism as an isolated phenomenon, for it must be placed in its national and world context. Thus the relation between the national labor and political developments with the Rochester socialist movement was established. The socialists of Rochester were part and parcel of the broader movement for reform, dating approximately from 1900 to 1917, which had been aptly labeled the Progressive Era.

Some of the Socialists, such as Upton Sinclair, John Spargo, and Charles Edward Russell, rank with the most famous of the muckrakers of the muckraking period. The social gospel, which gripped Rochester with the rest of the country, was one facet of the reform movement which was an almost inevitable reaction to the iniquities of the conditions brought forth by the Industrial Revolution in America. Likewise, extremely bad economic conditions stimulated extreme solutions. In the United States the early acceptance and practice of laissez-faire with its many attendant abuses had much to do with the early and ready acceptance of Marxism by such groups as the Socialist Labor Party and many members of the later Socialist Party.

As the Progressive Era got underway, with muckrakers, social gospelers, and socialists preaching re-

form, the government in America began the regulation of business in the public interest. The impact of the Socialists was added to that of other reform groups and individuals who, all-together, effected the changes which reduced or eliminated some of the grosser evils of the new industrial age.

The modification of industrial and economic conditions had two interesting and important results. One was the moderating effect it exerted on the demands of the greater number of American socialists; and the second was the inability of the socialists to recruit to their banner from among the discontented the numbers necessary for them to gain political power. As the trend toward an industrial oligarchy lessened and the trend toward industrial democracy increased, the industrial democrats saw the wisdom of preaching the realization of immediate reforms rather than the long-range, drastic changes. The American economic picture improved around 1900. There was a rise in the general standard of living, which was expressed through better wages, fewer working hours, and an increase in worker security features. The millenarians in the socialist ranks became fewer and fewer and the demise of the doctrinaire extremist was seemingly only a matter of time. The Socialist Party's popularity increased as

it embraced immediate demands after 1900, while the Socialist Labor Party after 1896 and the Wobblies after 1912 diminshed gradually in numbers as they abandoned the immediate for the remote, impractical demands of their program. The Russian Revolution brought with it a revival in the numbers of extreme socialists in America. Their ranks had declined greatly by 1917.

The story of the Rochester socialist movement for the 1900 to 1917 period is of intrinsic interest and has relevance for the times in which we now live. As in that period, we have today arising the old question of civil liberties. We have today, too, the primary question of that period, the question of freedom versus security. Where lies the fulcrum which shall balance security with freedom? The individualist and the socialist, then as now, differ on this important matter. There was and is now much conflict in the no-man's-land of freedom-security. Next to this question in significance perhaps is that rather curious situation where so many are caught in a semantic vise in which there are no distinctions, no definitions regarding the socialist philosophies, programs, and methods. There is much fencing with stereotypes, and many persons, making no distinctions, are unable

to discern friends from foe. In this situation there is considerable danger involved. When a liberal Democrat is considered and called a Socialist and a Socialist is lumped indiscriminately with a Communist, there is room for thought and definition. In the current Cold War such mistakes can be very costly and even fatal.

The Rochester socialists and other reformers of the 1900-1917 period exerted the pressure which led to the eventual regulation of industry in behalf of the general welfare. This new departure, beginning in Theodore Roosevelt's administration, was the turning point in United States history which prevented us from going down the road of economic oligarchy and turned us in the direction of increased economic democracy.

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